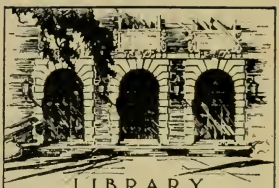

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FEUDAL TYRANTS;

OR,

The Counts of Carlsheim and Sargans.

A ROMANCE.

TAKEN FROM THE GERMAN.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY M. G. LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF

The Bravo of Venice, Adelgitha, Rugantino, &c.

VOL. II.

SECOND EDITION.

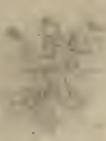
The portals sound, and pacing forth
With stately steps and slow,
High potentates, and dames of regal birth,
And mitred fathers in long order go. GRAY.

London:

Printed by D. N. SHURY, Berwick Street, Soho,

FOR J. F. HUGHES, WIGMORE STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE.

1807.



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FEUDAL TYRANTS,

&c. &c. &c.

Elizabeth, Countess of Torrenburg, to Count Oswald of March.

WITH this letter, my dear brother, you will receive a part of the manuscripts, which I engaged to send you: these leaves contain the memoirs of the unfortunate Urania Venosta, which have interested me greatly from a variety of reasons. I had erroneously supposed that the MS. was complete, but it proves to be nothing more than a fragment. Perhaps I imprudently included the second

part of her adventures in the number of those papers, which I was compelled to restore to the Abbess's custody; but I am rather more inclined to believe, that Time has destroyed the remainder of these memoirs, whose conclusion I am so desirous of perusing.

It's true, I have found a few more detached leaves, and the last page or two; but these only serve to augment a curiosity, which would have remained totally unsatisfied, if I had suffered the labour of examining the moth-eaten parchments to overcome my perseverance. I have now no reason to regret the trouble which I gave myself, since I owe to it the possession of several other manuscripts, relating to persons and circumstances already mentioned by Urania. The memoirs

moirs of Minna of Homburg and of Lucretia Malaspina are both lost; but I have found much respecting the two Ladies of Sargans, to whom Urania's narrative is addrest; much too respecting the noble and ill-fated Adelaide; as also several letters written by the latter, one of which seems to supply tolerably well the chasm in Urania's memoirs. As soon as I succeed in decyphering them (which, thanks to the dust and the moths, is no easy task) I will not fail to impart to you their contents.

You will ask me, what impression the perusal of this history has made on my heart. Ah! my dear brother, it is but too certain, that the unfortunate are apt to find their own resemblance every where! At first, how little simi-

lar do the fortunes of Urania and myself appear! and yet how easily might it have happened, that we should have both been sisters united in the same misfortune! Might not Henry of Montfort, (whose loss has cost me so many tears,) in spite of his fair exterior, have proved at heart as great a monster, as Ethelbert of Carlsheim proved in spite of *his?* May not the prayers, with which I solicited Heaven to grant me Henry's hand, have pleaded for that, whose possession would have proved to me the bitterest curse of Heaven?

Eternal Providence! never more will I murmur that you denied me a request, whose consequences were known to you far better than to myself. I besought you to bestow on me a blessing; you granted

granted it by withholding that, which if conferred on me would perhaps have made me miserable for ever.

Adelaide of the Beacon-Tower to Urania Venosta.

Oh! tell me, unhappy wife of my unhappy father; you, whom I would so gladly call my mother, had not she to whom Nature bade me give that valued name, compelled me to blend with it no ideas but those of pain and terror; you, whom I already love, and whose future affection I wish so anxiously to obtain; oh! tell me, Urania, was it but a dream, or have I indeed found at length the friend and sister whom I sought so long in vain, and whose counsels and whose comfort my tortured heart needs so greatly?

Yet

Yet alas! what avails it that we have met? Already are we separated, as I feared we should be, and separated (as I *now* fear) for ever! Yet, much as I grieve for what I lose myself by this event, still more do I grieve to think, that what *you* lose is greater!

How much do I now reproach myself, that when I stole to your tent at midnight to warn you and the fair partner of your captivity of what was about to happen, I should have been so tardy in acknowledging,—"*Count Donat of Carlsheim is a man not to be trusted.*"—Yet forgive me, Urania; Donat is my brother; and oh! it is so painful to declare a brother's disgrace!

I charge you, dear friend, in the name of Heaven and the Holy Virgin I charge

you, suffer not yourself to be deceived by his perfidious friendship. On your journey to the Castle seize the first opportunity of escaping; should you be once inclosed within the gates of Sargans, you have nothing to expect but a cruel death or an ignominious prison; and, alas for the damsel of Mayenfield! *she* has a still more dreadful lot to apprehend!

That hypocritical abbot Guiderius, or whatever be his detested name, who came to my brother's camp with his monks under pretence of pleading in your behalf, was skilful enough to discover Count Donat's darling weakness. He promised him the possession of a young beauty, who (according to his account) was entirely at the Abbot's disposal.

My

My brother, who never confides in the word of ecclesiastics, insisted on the immediate accomplishment of this promise; and the poor Minna was betrayed into the seducer's hands. You accompanied her, and by your presence increased the ardour with which I had resolved to labour at preserving the innocent girl; a service which I had already rendered to many others, who found themselves enveloped in the same snare.

I saw you, Urania; oh! how strong was the sympathy which attracted my heart towards you, my heart to which at this moment a friend is so necessary! It's true I have a sister; but she.... But you have already *seen* Mellusina, and you shall now *know* her.

Mellusina is privy to the designs of her faithless husband. Nothing but the promise of overlooking all his errors of this nature, and the temptation of her immense wealth, could have induced Donat to bestow on her the title of his wife. She is neither lovely in person, nor amiable in manners; and she bears a mortal hatred to every woman, who possesses those advantages which Nature has denied to herself. I cannot boast much of her good will towards me; yet I am compelled to pay my court to her, that she may not injure me with my brother, of whose powerful help my dear unfortunate husband stands at present but too much in need.

I trust a time will come when I may reveal to you the whole history of my sorrows;

sorrows; at present I can only repeat my warning. Yet surely some invisible power was disposed last night to give that warning in my stead! What could be the cause of that singular and terrific sensation, which we all felt at that moment, when Mellusina's sleep at length left me at liberty to afford you the information, which this letter contains? What was it that startled us all at the same instant, and made us utter a scream of fear? What form was it that passed before us so swiftly? Whence came that sound, which seemed like a distant bell tolling? Whose were the cold fingers which seemed to grasp my neck?—— Struck with an universal terror, we sprang from our seats at once, and asked each other—"What was that?"—Even

the slumbering Mellusina was rouzed from her insensibility by alarm, and the hand with which she drew me from your tent was cold and trembling!

Surely, Urania, this *must* have been the warning of your guardian angel, who wished to accomplish that which Mellusina's presence forbad my performing without danger.... unless indeed I were to give this mysterious event a different, and a more dreadful meaning! I know not why, but since that moment of terror in which we parted, the thought of my father never quits me for an instant! I trust no misfortune has befallen him.—Is he not in the hands of his son?—Alas! alas! and is not Donat capable of violating even the first and most sacred rights of Nature?

Oh!

Oh! good, good father! since I have seen Urania Venosta, how much more warmly does my heart glow towards you with filial affection! How despicable, how execrable was *she* described to be, for whose sake my mother was sacrificed; and how different did I find her from the description! Her dignified air, her interesting countenance, inspired even the savage Donat with respect! Oh! surely I have been equally deceived respecting Count Ethelbert; surely I shall still enjoy the blessing of being clasped to the bosom of a *virtuous* father!

Once again, beloved Urania, be cautious both with regard to your own proceedings and Minna's.—Fail not to let me know, as soon as possible, what

passes

passes at the Castle, if your evil genius decrees that you should be brought thither, and if an opportunity is afforded you of answering me by the faithful messenger, by whom this letter will be delivered. With regard to myself, I shall only inform you briefly, that my intention of warning you was suspected. Mellusina was commissioned to watch over me last night, as soon as it was discovered, that I had stolen to your tent unknown to my brother and his wife. In order to prevent the execution of my good design this morning, I was forcibly compelled to suffer you to depart without me for the Castle of Sargans; and I understand, that my absence was accounted for to you by the pretence of sudden illness. I am now setting

ting out, by Donat's orders, for the convent of St. Mary, at Basle: the Abbess is my secret friend, and soon after my arrival you shall hear from me. I trust, that I shall learn what has happened to you at the return of my messenger; and I need not assure you, that nothing in my power to assist you shall be neglected for a moment. Farewel!

Urania Venosta to the Abbess of St. Mary's.

The explanation which you demand of me, dear mother, would be very painful to make. For the benefit of my husband's grand-daughters, I have confided to paper the whole history of my misfortunes; and the first time that you visit our Domina, the manuscript shall be laid before you. For the present I shall only tell you thus much: From that fearful moment when an invisible agent warned me, that misfortune was at hand; when we all felt, saw, heard something, which even yet none of us have been able to describe or understand; when I saw my earthly guardian angel, *your*

Adelaide

Adelaide and *mine*, torn from me, and felt (yet knew not wherefore) that a separation from her was the signal for robbing me of all my hopes; from that moment was I doomed to experience sorrows, whose bitterness was till then unknown to me, practised as I was in the school of suffering.

The morning had scarcely broken, when we set forward for the Castle of Sargans; illness, as it was said, compelled Adelaide to remain behind, and her letter was not delivered till too late to be of use. Ere we reached the fortress, intelligence arrived that my unfortunate husband was no more. Guiderius, to whom the charge of him had been committed, had either been too remiss in watching him, or had trembled

bled for his own miserable existence while exposed to a madman's fury; or, as his enemies scrupled not to whisper (though the fact seems too atrocious for me to give it credit), had himself been the means of "ridding the world of an useless creature." Such was the expression used by the insolent vassal, who informed Count Donat that his father had perished by an untimely death: I had the satisfaction of seeing, that the Count of Carlsheim rewarded the base wretch as he deserved!

The body of Count Ethelbert was found in the ruined well, into which (so said the Abbot) he had precipitated himself in a fit of frantic passion. This story did not meet with implicit belief; even Count Donat was openly among

the

the disbelievers. Yet (after I had passed some time in the prison, which I was compelled to enter on the very evening of my arrival at that castle, of which I was the rightful owner) I was assured by my jailors that the Abbot of Curwald was fully reinstated in Count Donat's favour, and constantly partook of the licentious feasts, the noise of whose riotous pleasures penetrated even to the depth of my subterraneous dungeon.

Yet I was not entirely forsaken. My guardian angel, my kind protecting Adelaide suffered no circumstance to escape her, that might tend to my relief. On the first evening of our acquaintance (alas! it was the first and last, for never since have I been permitted to embrace the dear one!) I mentioned accidentally

that

that the daughters of the Emperor Rudolf had been my earliest friends and playmates: from this trifling hint did Adelaide derive means for effecting my deliverance. No sooner was she permitted to leave the convent, in which her brother at first caused her to be confined, than she made use of her liberty to procure mine; and (since she knew that gentle means would be of no avail) she endeavoured with the strong arm of authority to force me out of the power of my inhuman jailor.

She, who in a single interview had been inspired with so much interest and compassion for the unfortunate Urania; she, who in spite of her want of power was still able to benefit me so much, could little suspect that six powerful

Princesses

Princesses would remain inactive, when the business was to rescue from misery the companion of their childhood, the selected friend of their youth. Alas! she found herself mistaken: five of Rudolf's daughters were the wives of sovereign Princes; the interests of kingdoms occupied their attention, and left them no thought to bestow on her whom they had once treated as their equal, and to whom they had sworn at parting firm friendship and affection without end. One only of the five (it was Matilda, the virtuous Duchess of Saxony) listened to Adelaide's unwearied intercessions, and exerted her whole influence to obtain the Emperor's interference in my behalf.

Her endeavours were at length successful;

cessful; but ere I regained my freedom many years had elapsed, and by all but Adelaide's ardent friendship I was believed to be no more. During the first months of my captivity Minna of Mayenfield had experienced a persecution, compared to which my dungeon appeared a Paradise. For its particulars I refer you to the journal of her imprisonment, as written by herself: the Helvetian women even then were well skilled in guiding the pen, and did not yield in that noble art to many of the highest dignitaries of the church. Dear unfortunate Minna! who can restrain their tears while reading in your own affecting language the sad account of sufferings and trials, almost too difficult for the strength of a Saint to endure with

with fortitude or even patience, much less for an unprotected girl; and yet Minna passed through the flames victorious!

The enamoured Donat neglected no means of seduction, which might tempt his virtuous captive from the path of honour, and in this shameful attempt Mellusina was his faithful assistant. It is shocking to think, that a wife should be so depraved as to aid in removing the obstacles, which impede her husband in his licentious pursuits; and that a woman should forget her sex so far, as to aim at the destruction of female innocence! I am persuaded, since the world was created, there has been but one woman capable of such unworthy conduct; and that one was Mellusina.

The fascinating arts of seduction having

ing proved vain, they were followed by violence and ill-treatment; and when, after passing several months in ignorance of her fate, Lodowick of Homburg at length forced Count Donat's fortress in search of his bride, he found her in a subterraneous cell, similar to that in which I was myself imprisoned. I heard the tumult occasioned by her deliverance, and doubted not that my own was at hand.—Alas! my hopes were vain! My feeble cries could not reach the hearing of my friends; they knew not that those caverns contained any captive except Minna. Mellusina managed to persuade my adopted daughter and her deliverer, that I had paid the debt of Nature. They shed unavailing tears upon the grave, which the deceiver pointed out

out to them as mine, while buried alive beneath the castle's foundations I shrieked to them for help in vain; and I sank from the height of my deceived hopes into the deepest despair, till time and faith in God at length restored me to composure.

The only effect resulting to myself from Minna's deliverance was, that the strictness of my imprisonment was increased. The Count of Homburg's desperate enterprize could only have succeeded, while Donat was absent; and the latter now seldom left the Castle, lest similar accidents should occur. They say, that the fires of the infernal regions burn doubly fierce, when their monarch returns from his wanderings on earth; such too was the case in the Castle of

Sargans—When their tyrant breathed the same air with them, the chains of the poor captives were rendered doubly heavy, and their sufferings doubly sharp!

Yet was he not permitted to kill me, since Heaven had decreed, that I should at last see the moment of deliverance. Adelaide still maintained, that I was in existence; imperial majesty interfered in my behalf, and insisted on Donat's producing proofs of my death. My tyrant became embarrassed, and at length proposed to me that my liberty should be restored, provided I would voluntarily make over the whole of my possessions (which descended to me in right of my uncle) to the man, who had so long unlawfully possessed them. I joyfully embraced the offer. I had long considered liberty as

the

the only real wealth; I had long harboured no other wish than to end my wretched life in the repose and security of a cloister!

The sacrifice of my inheritance was completed, and Donat condescended to conduct me from my prison with his own hand; he even carried his hypocrisy so far (when he presented me to the nobleman who had negociated with him by order of the Emperor and the Duchess of Saxony) as to call me "his kind mother, to whose affection he was indebted for the greatest part of his possessions." Yes! the wretch dared to profane the name of mother! How ill would that sacred word have accorded with the marks of his tyranny, with which my wrists were still scarred, had it been

pronounced before impartial hearers? But the persons into whose charge I was delivered, were contented with having obtained my liberty, the only point expressed in their instructions. Far was it from the intention of my royal deliverers, that I should have been compelled to pay so dearly for my escape from Donat's power; but I was myself prepared to make the sacrifice, and was besides much too weak to vindicate my rights against my powerful oppressor. Those who could have advised me and acted in my behalf, Edith and her daughter, were far from me, and still believed me to be no longer in existence.

Under the protection of the imperial envoys (though in truth their manner of

of executing their commission had given me but little reason to believe them much disposed to protect me) I hastened to the convent, which I had selected for my future abode. Yet I left behind me in Count Donat's castle a treasure, with which I was deeply grieved to part, and which I would most joyfully have taken with me. During the few days which want of strength to begin my journey compelled to remain his guest, the Count of Carlsheim thought it proper to shew me every mark of outward respect; his attentions, which he forced me to endure, excited in me only sentiments of disgust at his hypocrisy, till he presented to me his daughters, or (as he chose to call them) my grand-children, whom my

bounty had destined to be the future heiresses of Sargans.

They were lovely innocent cherubs, born during the second year of my captivity. The birth of these twin-sisters had cost Mellusina her life; and the loss of a mother so unworthy might have been reckoned their gain, had not Heaven abandoned them to the care of a father, whose example was likely to ruin them both in body and mind. Oh! Emmeline! oh! Amalberga! how closely did you entwine yourselves round my heart, even in those few days of our first acquaintance! When I was about to leave you, you clung to me, wept, and begged me to take you with me! Oh! could you but have known what I suffered,

suffered, when I tore myself from your little arms, Heaven knows how unwillingly!—I cast a melancholy look on Count Donat, and in the most humble manner hazarded a request: but instantly his brow was clouded with frowns, and in an ironical tone he asked me—"Whether I could not confide in his sincerity without his delivering up hostages?"—

Heaven be praised, his sincerity and his insincerity have been since then a matter of indifference to me; protected by these holy walls and the power of the good Domina of Zurich, I no longer tremble at the thoughts of Count Donat's hatred. Nor have unexpected causes of rejoicing been denied me, even in this abode of pious seclusion. The

youngest of the Emperor Rudolf's daughters, the gentle and pious Euphemia, whose grave and prudent air had made her an object of ridicule to her sportive sisters and the thoughtless Urania, and who in the days of petulant youth had ever been excluded from our circle and our girlish secrets; Euphemia was the first, whose open arms received me on my arrival at the convent of Zurich. She congratulated me with a joy, which evidently came from the heart, on my having reached a place of security; and she offered me a friendship, whose value I now first learnt to estimate, when time and sorrow had humbled and instructed me.

She had learnt my story through her sister, the Duchess of Saxony, and had quitted

quitted the convent of Tull, where she led the life of a Saint, to wait for my arrival at Zurich, and comfort me in person for the many sufferings which I had undergone. I have since had good reason to believe, that her approach to Count Donat's neighbourhood, and her declared resolution never to rest till she had obtained my liberty (a resolution which she took care should reach the Castle of Sargans), had no slight weight in influencing the determination of my tyrant: the wretched Urania would probably have expired long since in Count Donat's dungeons, had not the eyes of this benevolent Princess been fixed upon the forlorn one's destiny!

What have I not besides to thank her for! It is to her that I am indebted for

a reunion with my beloved Edith and her daughter, who received me as one just risen from the dead. It is to her too that I am indebted for your valuable friendship, Holy Mother, and for the hope of once more embracing my preserver, my sister, my Adelaide! Till that wished-for moment arrives, never must you expect me, venerable Lady, to desist from entreating you to make me more accurately informed respecting the past adventures and present situation of my unequalled friend. I know, they are both strange and melancholy; and a cloister is exactly the place, where the relation of such histories nourish the emotions of holy pity, and produce a calm submissive adoration of the wonderful and mysterious ordinations of that Providence, which formed and which governs the world.

PART THE THIRD.

MEMOIRS

OF

Adelaide of the Beacon-Tower;

Written by the Abbess of St. Mary's, and addressed to Urania Venosta, Countess of Carlsheim and Sargans.

I MUST begin, noble Lady, by requesting your pardon for having delayed so long to make known to you an history, which I thought would have more interest in the mouth of its heroine, than it could possibly receive from my unskilful pen. Fatal events (I grieve to

say it) have for ever deprived you of that satisfaction; and you must either learn Adelaide's adventures from me, or from no one.

Have not these few words already led you to guess the melancholy truth, which this letter is intended to break to you? Oh! that the painful task of being the first to inform you "that Adelaide is no more," had been imposed upon another! Yet surely it is scarcely possible, that report should have been totally silent at Zurich, respecting events which have excited the attention of the whole German Empire.

Yet dry your tears, virtuous Urania! they who have lived in the world so long as we have done, should not grieve for the departure of our beloved-ones; the

the hope of speedily rejoining them in another world, never to be separated from them more, should console us under this temporary deprivation. Lament not, that you are prevented from shewing your gratitude to your generous deliverer; she will find the reward of her glorious deeds in Heaven; alas! she found none on earth!

Tell me, dear Adelaide, thou suffering Saint! Chaste martyr of the holiest love, say, with what feelings do you now enshrined in glory review the sorrows, which oppressed you in your mortal progress? Doubtless you review them not with such tears as obscure the eyes of your friend, while in this mournful hour of midnight solitude she retraces the transactions of your eventful life! Methinks

thinks I see your form radiant with light hover round me, and hear you with a smile bid me weep no more over afflictions, which now seem to yourself no longer deserving of a single tear!

You see, Urania, how difficult I find the task of beginning a narrative, which must rend open anew many an old and cruel wound; you see how anxiously I endeavour to delay the executing so painful a commission. But I gave you my promise! You shall be satisfied!—Permit me, however, to be as brief as possible, and to reserve the relation of minute particulars till the time, when I shall have an opportunity of explaining them to you in person.

That which I look upon as the first of our dear Adelaide's misfortunes, was her being

being the daughter of Lucretia Malaspina. Lucretia (you already know but too well) was not lovely enough to bind Count Ethelbert's heart in lasting fetters; nor did she possess that generous and almost Saint-like forbearance, with which Urania supported the misfortunes necessarily entailed upon the wife of such an husband. The discovery of an artifice, which her short-sighted policy had induced her to practice upon him, contributed to alienate Ethelbert's affections, and to convert what already was indifference into the most positive aversion.

Lucretia's wealth was a chief inducement with the Count of Carlsheim, when he offered her his hand. The birth of a son gave occasion to a discovery, that the

the estates believed to be her own absolute property were only held in trust for her eldest son, to whom they descended with the first breath of air that inflated his lungs. Within a year after Lucretia had been brought to bed for the first time, to Ethelbert's infinite surprise he was summoned to surrender his wife's estates to the guardians, appointed by her uncle's will to take charge of them, till the new-born infant should arrive at years of discretion. Ethelbert's rage was extreme; he was compelled to surrender the property, and in revenge was barbarous enough to tear the child from its mother's arms, commit it to the care of strangers without informing her to whom, and then to abandon her with every expression of hatred and contempt.

tempt. Lucretia bore this parting (dearly as she loved her incensed husband) with the more fortitude, from her secret consciousness that she nourished in her bosom another innocent creature, and from her fears that if Ethelbert were present at the time of her delivery, the new-born babe would be separated from her in the same manner, that she had been deprived of its brother. The same apprehension, on being brought to bed of twins, induced her to conceal the birth of one of them, in order that she might at least have the pleasure of seeing it grow up under her own eye, should Ethelbert's vengeance induce him to deprive her of the other. Accident directed her choice, which fell upon Adelaide.

The

The event, however, proved her fears to have been for this time unfounded. At a distance from her, and totally engrossed by his own libertine pursuits, Ethelbert scarcely deigned to bestow upon her a single thought. Yet Lucretia's partiality for her son Donat, which every day increased, prevented her from revealing the birth of his twin-sister, who would then have had a joint and equal right with him to those estates, of which at that period the death of his elder brother (while yet an infant) made him to be supposed the sole inheritor. Thus Adelaide grew up under her mother's eyes, and was the play-mate of her brother, without having the least suspicion how nearly she was related to either of them. This was of inconceivable advantage

vantage to her in her early education. She believed herself to be a vassal's daughter in that house, of which she ought to have shone as the joint-heiress; and as the youthful Donat enjoyed all the advantages of his rank, and made his dependents feel the whole weight of his influence, many a lesson of humility and patient suffering did Adelaide learn in her youth, which was of material service to her in the painful scenes, which she had afterwards to encounter. Donat ruled his mother with the most despotic authority; his resemblance to herself, that violence of passions which he possessed in common with her, and the docility with which he received her pernicious instructions had won Lucretia's whole heart, and left no room in it

for

for her neglected daughter; who thus was early afforded frequent opportunities of submitting to injustice, without being conscious that her treatment was unjust.

Lucretia had been wise enough to foresee, long before they arrived, that such events might very possibly happen, as actually did at length take place. With all her love for Ethelbert, she had discovered his faults sufficiently to make her take precautions for her own security; and she endeavoured to confine his actions by means, which though they still preserved her the title of his wife, were nevertheless insufficient to prevent her suffering the extreme of misery and disappointment.

She knew well, that little as Count

Ethelbert

Ethelbert *loved* religion, he greatly *dreaded* it: she therefore (previous to their marriage) insisted on his taking a most solemn oath, that however they might disagree, or however his sentiments might alter, he would never attempt her life, nor would (even in case of a divorce) make the offer of his hand to a rival, as long as she herself should still be in existence. She thus hoped to bind her inconstant lover in eternal chains; but she little dreamt of so tyrannical a subterfuge, as that by which the hypocrite contrived to evade the consequences of his oath.

Though she found all endeavours to regain his affection were vain, she still watched her husband's conduct with jealous eyes. While he visited in turn

every

every Italian state, whose reputation promised him new means of indulging his propensity to pleasure, her spies still pursued him wherever his footsteps strayed. Lucretia was accurately informed respecting his intrigues; and seldom did the objects of Ethelbert's licentious passions escape without experiencing the vengeance of his wife. His short-lived inclination once gratified, the Count of Carlsheim heeded but little what became of his victim, and Lucretia was suffered to exercise her resentment unimpeded; but the case was altered, when Urania Venosta became the mistress of his heart. Her extraordinary beauty, her high rank, and her immense possessions made him at the same time desirous of becoming her husband,

hopeless

hopeless of gratifying the passion with which she inspired him, except by giving her his hand. It therefore became absolutely necessary, that Lucretia should be removed. He contrived by various well-imagined artifices to lure her into Germany; where she had no sooner set her foot, than he caused her to be seized privately, and confined in Ravenstein Castle. A plausible story was then spread of her having expired suddenly: no one was interested to dispute the fact, except her son, who in truth was fondly attached to her; but his youth and devoted attention to licentious pursuits prevented Donat from inquiring minutely into the circumstances, which attended his mother's death. Lucretia was believed to be no more by all but

Count

Count Ethelbert, who was thus left at liberty to pursue his designs upon the lovely heiress of Sargans.

Adelaide had accompanied her mistress (for such she was taught to believe her mother) when she quitted Italy; she refused to be separated from her, followed her courageously to the Castle of Ravenstein, and shared with her the miseries of her long captivity. Then was it, that the mother's heart for the first time felt a sentiment of tenderness for her rejected daughter. Adelaide learnt from Lucretia's lips her real name and rank, and while she clasped her to her bosom, was permitted for the first time to call her mother. Yet was the severity of her fate but little alleviated by this discovery. Lucretia's heart was

naturally

naturally hard; it was incapable of harbouring so pure a sentiment as that of true parental love. Long sufferings and much disappointment had still further embittered her character. To that kind of moral delirium, which ever attends on a corrupted heart, was now frequently added a temporary alienation of the understanding; and when Adelaide reflected, that the wretched woman, whose complicated misery (both mental and corporeal) was every moment before her eyes, was her own mother, the knowledge of her birth only served to make her feel a double portion of agony.

Day and night was Lucretia employed in forming plans of revenge against her cruel husband, and the innocent usurper of her matrimonial rights. She had

early taught the innocent Adelaide to hate Urania Venosta: in the eyes of that deceived girl the heiress of Sargans was nothing better than Count Ethelbert's abandoned paramour, who had insolently forced herself into the place of his lawful wife, and had been the principal and conscious cause of her mother's being confined in that deserted castle. But in despite of these prejudices against you, which Lucretia had infused into the heart of her daughter, she found it impossible to make her enter cheerfully into the plans, which she was continually forming for your destruction. Adelaide was well aware, that her mother was totally without the power of carrying her wicked designs into execution; but still she could not prevail on herself to

assume

assume even the appearance of giving them her approbation. This obstinacy and incessant contradiction of her hopes and views at length made her so completely the object of Lucretia's aversion, that she insisted on her daughter's being separated from her, and confined in the deepest dungeon, which the subterraneous caverns of the Castle could supply.

You are acquainted, Urania, with the weakness of the man, who was at that time Castellan of Ravenstein. He possessed a singular kind of conscience, which frequently made his actions contradictory. Lucretia had found means to send letters to her son in Italy, of which conduct (as it was not formally prohibited in his instructions) he af-

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fected not to take notice; but as he had been ordered to confine her *rigorously*, she found it impossible to obtain from him the slightest alleviation of her sufferings. Again, as Adelaide had been delivered to his custody at the same time with her mother, no entreaties could prevail on him to restore her to liberty; but it required but little persuasion to make him believe, that she ought to submit to the punishment, which the person (whom he believed to be her mistress) thought proper to inflict on her.

Adelaide therefore was separated from her unnatural mother. She was removed to a subterraneous cell, whose strength proved the means of preserving her on that dangerous night, when Lucretia in

despair

despair and frenzy enveloped the whole fortress in flames. The fire raged above her; but she knew not what occasioned the confusion, which seemed to have taken place in the Castle. Her wretched mother died without mentioning her name, and her corse was committed to the earth unknown to her daughter. The deliverance of Urania and the Countess of Mayenfield was effected; the Castellan, who alone knew the place of her confinement, had been dangerously hurt during the conflagration, and in his last moments was too much occupied by the terrors of approaching dissolution to bestow a thought on his prisoner. No one knew what was become of the poor Adelaide; no one enquired, no one cared.

Scarcely had you escaped from Ravenstein through the well-imagined device of Walter Forest and his followers, before your jailors began to suspect the truth. A variety of circumstances combined to prove that they had been overreached, and they were enabled to see the whole adventure in its true light. In truth, nothing but the rashness of the attempt and the rapidity of its execution could have prevented them from making this discovery sooner.

They were provoked beyond measure at the contemptible part, which they had played on this occasion; too much time had already elapsed to leave them any hopes of over-taking the fugitives, and to pursue them now had been only giving themselves unavailing trouble.

When

When they reflected on the wrath of their tyrannical lord, terror almost turned their blood into ice. It was evident, that nothing could preserve them from destruction, but immediate flight from a place, whose natural horrors were increased tenfold by the ravages of the late conflagration, and by the recollection of many a cruel action, which they had committed within those dreary walls!

Flight then was resolved upon unanimously; but they thought it as well, not to quit Ravenstein with empty hands. Its true, the whole wealth, that was to be found there above ground, consisted in chains, rusty armour, and instruments of torture; but report had assured them, that treasures of immense value lay con-

cealed in the subterraneous parts of the Castle, and these they determined not to leave behind them.

They tore open the bosom of the rock, on which the Castle was situated, without discovering aught but Adelaide's dungeon, in which she was found almost at the point of death, not having tasted nourishment for several days. They were humane enough to remove the unfortunate girl into a purer atmosphere, and to exert themselves in some measure to effect her recovery. Her beauty probably was of some use in persuading the younger part of the garrison to assist her the more readily; and what little wealth she possest in jewels (the only presents of her unnatural mother) purchased for her the protection of the more ancient and flinty-hearted.

While

While they were busied in attending upon her, she heard them talk much respecting the escape of two ladies, who as well as Lucretia and herself had been prisoners at Ravenstein: she also heard Walter Forest mentioned as their deliverer, for Count Ethelbert's deceived soldiers had by that time discovered who their deceiver *really* was, and where he resided. On these hints did Adelaide build a plan for her escape from the society of these lawless ruffians, for whose temporary mercy (she saw clearly) she was only indebted to her illness and to the hurry of their preparations for flight. At the risk of her life therefore did she, in spite of her weak condition, take the advantage of a stormy night to escape from the Castle, and hasten to the tran-

quil valley inhabited by that friend of the opprest, Walter Forest; who failed not to receive the poor Adelaide also with the same openness and hospitality, with which he had received ourselves.

She rewarded his kindness by apprizing him of the attack, with which he had been threatened by the soldiery of Ravenstein in revenge for the artifice, by which he had contrived the escape of their captives. The war ing however proved unnecessary, for the cowardly vassals of the Count of Carlsheim had already altered their plans. Adelaide's flight had ruined their hopes of falling upon Walter by surprize; they did not dare to attack openly the brave inhabitants of the Frutiger Valley; and they judged it more prudent on many accounts

counts to proceed without delay to request protection of the Lords of Eschenbach from the resentment of the Count of Carlsheim. Ravenstein Castle had originally belonged to the family of Eschenbach; the protection asked was readily granted; the rebellious vassals of Count Ethelbert took the oath of allegiance to their new master, and the shattered towers of Ravenstein Castle were delivered into his possession.

In the mean while Adelaide, under the escort of some of Walter Forest's people, arrived in safety at the place, to which she had desired to be conducted. She knew in what part of Italy Donat was then resident; and as the prejudices, with which she had been inspired against Count Ethelbert and his second wife,

prevented her seeking a refuge in her paternal mansion, there seemed for her no proper abode except with her brother. Her reception was kinder, than she had expected from her experience of Donat's unfeeling nature. He was young, and indulged himself to excess in the pleasures of voluptuous Italy: if his dissolute mode of life had not bettered his heart, it had at least made it softer, and more accessible to compassion, when the indulgence of that sentiment did not interfere with his own gratifications. Therefore though he listened with impatience to Adelaide's melancholy account of her mother's sufferings in Ravenstein Castle, and suffered his pleasures to make him put off from day to day the affording Lucretia that

that aid, of which her daughter (who was still ignorant of her decease) never ceased to assure him, she stood so much in need: still was he not without compassion for the helpless situation of his sister, nor so blind to merit, as to reject the title of brother to a creature so amiable and so deserving. Of their relationship he had no doubt; Adelaide had brought with her the acknowledgment of her birth written by Lucretia's own hand; and had other proofs been wanting, the strong resemblance impress by Nature on the features of Donat and his sister would have left the spectator no doubt, that they sprang from the same parents.

Adelaide, however, soon discovered, that she could not long accept with propriety

priety the protection afforded her in her brother's house. Count Donat was surrounded day and night by a swarm of youthful libertines, who sported in the sunshine of his wealth, assisted him in his licentious pursuits, and were his companions in all the excesses of his unrestrained habits of enjoyment. His lovely sister became the general object of their insolent addresses; and Donat had neither firmness of mind nor love of reputation sufficient to guard her against their importunities.

She entreated permission to retire into a convent; but this was refused her with too much anger and determination to permit her making the request a second time. She therefore found herself compelled to give her hand to one of her

her admirers, who might at least protect her from the insults of the rest; and fortunately both for him and for myself, the man who was least displeasing to her among the number, was Rodolpho of the Beacon-Tower; was my brother. I have to thank *him* for the happiness of calling one of the best of created women by the name of friend; I have to thank *her* for having snatched from the jaws of ruin the dear but erring youth, whom I loved, though but his sister, with affection not less fervent than a mother's!

At that time I resided in an Italian cloister, sufficiently near the theatre of Count Donat's exploits for the report of them to reach me, and to make me bewail the fate of those, who were drawn by his example into the whirlpool of licentiousness.

Alas!

Alas! the intelligence at length reached me, that my unfortunate brother was one of the young Count of Carlsheim's most distinguished companions in his profligate career. Mutual friendship united them; and Rodolpho's warm heart and too yielding nature made him look upon it as the highest pitch of human glory, when he trod in the footsteps of his abandoned friend.

My warnings and remonstrances had no effect upon the poor misguided youth. You must be well aware, dear Urania, that instructions coming from the mouth of a Nun are little regarded by the worldly, merely because it *is* a Nun who speaks them. Very different was the effect of those reproofs, which the lovely Adelaide condescended to be-

stow

stow on her admirer. I have already told you, that among the Damsel of Carlsheim's suitors my brother was the man who displeased her the least; and this is the strongest term which can be applied to her sentiments towards him at that period. It is true, Rodolpho was esteemed (and that justly) the handsomest youth in Italy; but Adelaide's mind was too elevated to suffer her heart to be captivated by the mere glare of a pleasing exterior. The man, whom she now honoured with her choice, would undoubtedly have been seen by her with as much indifference as his worthless companions, had she not found some traces of manly sense in his bewildered brain, and in his erring heart

some

some still surviving sparks of the love of virtue.

What cannot female beauty, when united with solid sense and a feeling mind, effect upon a being, who is not yet totally lost to every sense of goodness? Guided by the hand of Adelaide, already had Rodolpho retraced many a step in the paths of vice: she made his immediate departure from the theatre of his follies the only condition, on which she would bestow on him her hand. He loved her; he complied: Adelaide became my sister, and my brother was entirely rescued.

Oh! dearest Adelaide, how heartily did I thank you (when bidding you farewel) for removing from the dangers of

Italy

Italy a man, whom I knew to be as safe in your arms, as under the wings of his protecting angel! Willingly did I part with him, since he left me but to follow the path of virtue, in which you knew how to guide him so well!

She was no sooner Rodolpho's wife, than Adelaide insisted on his immediately performing his promise to quit Italy: she saw, that her personal remonstrances had no power to hasten Donat's departure for Ravenstein; and she was obliged to content herself with receiving from him the most solemn assurances, that he would proceed to liberate his unfortunate mother without further delay; assurances, which he had frequently made before, and which were performed

no better on this, than they had been on former occasions.

Adelaide advised her husband (who could refuse nothing to her entreaties) to accompany her to the Court of the German Emperor, where there was no doubt of his easily obtaining an employment suited to his rank and talents. Rodolpho had but one objection to offer against taking this step. Rudolf of Hapsburg had been succeeded in the imperial throne by Adolphus of Nassau. This unfortunate monarch, who was long the friend and benefactor of our family, was cut off in the middle of his glorious career by the sword of Albert of Austria; and his crown became the prey of the powerful conqueror, whose brows it still

still decorated. My father lost his life in defence of his sovereign at the battle of Worms; and his last words commanded his son Rodolpho (who together with many other young Knights made on that day his first trial in arms) to revenge the deaths of his father and his sovereign.

This dying injunction was the reason, why Rodolpho had hitherto refused to accept any employment from the successful Albert; and as good intentions frequently produce bad effects, the want of proper occupation had betrayed him into that dissolute course of life, from which he was snatched by Adelaide. This dying injunction was the cause also of his being still unwilling to lay himself under obligations to one, whom he had

had long been accustomed to call by no other name, than that of the "regicide Albert."

Adelaide however prevailed at length over all his objections; he entered into the Imperial service, and endeavoured to forget, that the man, whom he acknowledged as his master, was the murderer of the beloved and still regretted Adolphus: yet frequently no influence less strong than Adelaide's would have been able to repress the ebullitions of that struggling resentment, which still existed in his bosom, and to retain him firm in the path of his duties. However, in spite of his disinclination to Albert's service, he proved himself to be a hero on all warlike occasions; and often did he express the warmest grati-

tude

tude to his wife for having rescued him from his ignominious effeminacy, and excited the dormant flame of valour in his bosom.

Still he lost no opportunity of showing, that Albert's yoke sat heavy upon him, and that he desired nothing more ardently than to exchange the Imperial service for some other. Dissentions arose between the Emperor and his two sons, the Margraves Dietman and Frederick; Rodolpho failed not to side with the latter, and became their father's prisoner. The unfortunate Adelaide could of herself do nothing to assist her husband, and hastened to implore for him her brother's powerful interference.

Count Donat's situation had undergone material changes during her absence.

sence. She had left him, not only in possession of the large domains bequeathed him by his maternal grandfather, but the favourite of a Prince who loaded him with favours and wealth. Sudden death had deprived him of this powerful protector; his unbounded extravagance had exhausted his treasures; and no means of rescuing himself from the most degrading state of poverty was left him, except an union with a person incapable of inspiring him with the least affection; and who had nothing to recommend her to his choice except her immense property, and her childish passion for this handsome libertine. Shortly before Rodolpho's imprisonment had Mellusina become the wife of Count Donat; and on Adelaide's arrival in Italy,

she

she understood, that her brother had at length set out on his long-promised expedition to Ravenstein Castle.

Thither she followed him, and was politely though coldly received by her new sister-in-law. Mellusina gave herself out to be a natural daughter of the deceased Emperor Adolphus; and she believed herself entitled by so illustrious an origin to treat every one else with haughtiness and contempt. Had she had any other resource, never would Adelaide have accepted the protection which was here afforded her with such insolent condescension; but friendless and destitute as was her present situation, she now could do nothing but suffer and submit.

She found her brother too much

occupied by his own projects to bestow a single thought upon the affairs of others. He listened not to the imploring voice of his sister; he heeded not the misfortunes of his former friend. Grief for the untimely death of his mother, who had perished through his inattention to her prayers, and projects of revenge against those whom he accused of her sufferings, engrossed his every thought. Adelaide could obtain nothing from him, except a promise of assistance when he should have satisfied his animosity against Lucretia's murderers; and instead of seeing him lead his forces to the fortress in which her husband languished, she was obliged to follow him to Sargans, where she had many a painful scene to undergo, of which

you,

you, dear Urania, were partly a witness.

Sorrow and self-reproach; the disappointment of his too highly-raised youthful expectations; his union with a woman whom he hated; and above all the consequences of a life passed in scenes of the most unbridled profligacy, a ruined constitution and an accusing conscience; all these together had hardened Count Donat's heart, and embittered his temper; had annihilated his few good qualities, and had left his bad ones visible in the full extent of their enormity. His misanthropic heart longed for a suitable employment, and only waited for an excuse to make others feel the tortures, which preyed upon himself. The sight of Adelaide brought

more strongly to his mind the recollection of his wretched mother, whom he had so long forgotten, and who had so vainly applied to her son for help: he remembered well, how often his sister had implored him to set forward for Ravenstein, and had warned him, that his mother's death might probably be the consequence of his delay. The more he reflected, the more fierce became his rage; and he determined to proceed to Rhætia, revenge his mother, and exact from his father a severe account respecting her long imprisonment and miserable death. It was also his design to enforce his right to his paternal estates, from which Count Ethelbert (incensed at the discovery of Lucretia's artifice in regard to her supposed possessions) had

disinherited

disinherited his children by his first wife.

Count Ethelbert and Urania Venosta had been described to Adelaide in the most odious colours; notwithstanding which, she shuddered, while listening to the threats which her brother breathed against them. How did the sight rend her gentle heart, when she saw the avenger's sword raised by the son against his father! Her prayers, her remonstrances had no effect upon Count Donat and his ambitious wife, who founded on Ethelbert's ruin plans for their own future greatness. During her abode at Ravenstein, Adelaide discovered for the first time the natural cruelty of her brother's disposition: report cannot have permitted you to remain ignorant, with

what torrents of blood the furious Donat inundated the vales of Frutiger. The anxiety and terror, with which you received the news of his approach towards your residence, sufficiently prove that you were aware, how little hope you entertained of escaping from his frantic fury.

Adelaide was aware of it also; and she trembled, if not for her unknown step-mother, at least for her unfortunate father, who (tyrant as she believed him to be) she still thought possest from Nature an authority over his children, which no conduct of his could forfeit, however criminal. The distrest daughter would have suffered still more severely from apprehension, founded on reasons but too strong; had she not

seized

seized a lucky moment of unusual good humour to obtain a solemn oath from Donat, that Ethelbert's life should be held sacred by him, and that she never should endure the agony of seeing her brother's hands stained with the blood of their common father.

Dreadful is it to think, that such a promise should have ever been reckoned necessary! In truth, Count Donat himself felt the bitter reflection conveyed in Adelaide's request; and while he yielded to her importunity, he chid her with severity for harbouring such ungrounded suspicions. I am persuaded, that Donat was not quite the monster at that time, which he appeared to be when seen in his moments of frantic passion; nay, I am inclined from a variety of mo-

tives to ascribe to him a very trifling share in that melancholy transaction, whose real circumstances are covered with a veil of impenetrable obscurity, and whose execution was too barbarous for me to attribute it even to the base Guiderius himself. Doubtless Count Ethelbert's miserable end was effected by a sudden burst of frenzy; in a moment of terror and despair his own hand inflicted on himself the punishment of former errors, and (I fear!) of former crimes!

You appeared at Count Donat's camp, Urania, to solicit the pardon of your wretched guilty husband. To see you was sufficient to obtain for you Adelaide's affection, and to annihilate every prejudice, which had so carefully been instilled

instilled into her mind against you. She endeavoured to make you aware of the dangers which threatened you; but obstacles both visible and invisible interposed to prevent your preservation. Your friend's unwillingness to speak ill of a brother; Mellusina's unexpected intrusion and persevering stay in your tent; and above all, that singular and inexplicable occurrence which made the whole society separate in such terror, all combined to retain you in the road, destined to lead you into long captivity.

Never could Adelaide mention without shuddering the mysterious adventure of that night. She ever anxiously avoided speaking on the subject, and referred me to you for more accurate

information. However, the account which in compliance with my request you forwarded to me, was nothing more than that, which I had already heard from my sister-in-law: anxiety to unravel this mystery made me even have recourse to Mellusina, but without success. Her account of the matter was no less obscure, strange, and unaccountable.

The next morning, her brother thought it adviseable to prevent Adelaide from accompanying you to the Castle of Sargans, and therefore gave out, that she was taken ill unexpectedly. In truth, this was no pretended indisposition. The supposed interference of a spiritual being had made the strongest impression upon her imagination; and when Count Donat's attendants delivered her up to

my

my charge (he was then ignorant, how closely she was connected with the Abbess of St. Mary's) her situation was such, that you cannot easily picture it to yourself too melancholy—The return of the messenger, whom she had dispatched to you, only served to increase her illness; he communicated to her without sufficient precaution the news of her unfortunate father's miserable death, and added to it the account of your ill-treatment and captivity. Like all who are possest of sensibility too acute, she loaded herself with reproaches for not having taken measures to prevent these heavy misfortunes; and it was long, before the soothing of friendship could succeed in pacifying her. To complete her distress but one thing

more was necessary, and it arrived: a report prevailed (and was universally credited) that her husband had fallen a victim to the Emperor's resentment. As Superior of St. Mary's cloister, I could have afforded my poor sister a secure and agreeable shelter within these tranquil walls; but the desire to weep over her husband's grave, and her anxiety to rescue you from the dungeon in which you languished, compelled her to return once more into the hated world. She was conscious, that you were the captive of a man, whose cruelty was but too well known to her; and she vowed solemnly never to rest, till she had broken the chains imposed upon you so unjustly.

She saw too plainly, that the united

forces of the Counts of Mayenfield and Homburg would be unable to force you out of the power of the mighty Lord of the domains of Carlsheim and Sargans; besides both Edith and her daughter were persuaded of your death, and looked on Adelaide's assertions of your existence in Donat's dungeons, as being the mere effusions of that enthusiastic affection, which easily believes whatever it wishes to be true. But no representations, no neglect could induce your protectress to lay aside her hopes of effecting your deliverance; and she addrest herself to the Emperor Rudolf's daughters, whose powerful interference she trusted would easily obtain your release.

Of all those powerful Princesses, the

Duchess

Duchess of Saxony alone (the virtuous Matilda, whose own domestic misfortunes might have furnished her with a sufficient excuse in the world's estimation, for declining to embarrass herself with the affairs of others) exerted herself seriously in your behalf. Her sister Euphemia, retired in a convent and forgotten by the world, had little to offer toward your release except good wishes; yet what little she *could* offer, she offered gladly, and shared her sister's joy at the news of your deliverance. I understand, that this royal Nun will soon exchange her convent at Tull for that which you inhabit, solely from the wish to end her life in your society. Oh! Urania, how greatly does all that I hear of you increase my desire to know you personally!

ally! What unusual merit must that woman possess, who could obtain so warm and unabating an interest in the hearts of three of the noblest of created beings, Euphemia, Matilda, and my poor Adelaide!

Yet I forget too long the heroine of my history, while occupying myself with Urania; I resume the thread of my narrative. Adelaide found at Emperor Albert's court, (whither she repaired to plead in your behalf in person) that an happiness was reserved for her, which she had never expected to enjoy again on this side the grave: her husband was still living. The same false report, which had persuaded her of his death, had taken no less pains to persuade Rodolpho, that she was faithless. Her

journey

journey to Italy for the purpose of persuading her brother to interfere in behalf of her imprisoned Lord; the expedition to Sargans, in which she was obliged to accompany Count Donat; the length of time, which elapsed without his knowing what had become of her, and which she had past in my convent almost at the point of death; these and a variety of other circumstances had all been represented to Rodolpho in the most odious light. In his dungeon (whence he had but lately been released on the reconciliation between the Emperor and his sons) it was impossible for him to detect the falsehood of these reports; but Adelaide needed but to shew herself to the man who loved her with such unbounded affection, and all his

injurious

injurious suspicions were annihilated at once. A few words were sufficient to persuade him of the truth; a truth, which was confirmed by the testimony of those, under whose eyes she had been residing.

What tongue is capable of describing the reunion of two lovers long separated; it is a fore-taste of that reunion, which we expect to enjoy with the objects of our affection beyond the grave, in another world better and happier. The one saw her belief in the untimely death of her beloved dissolved like a painful dream; the other saw those stains removed, which had sullied her purity on whom his soul doated; both felt, that the turbulent raptures of their early love were less sweet, than this renewal of

their

their long-tried affection! Forgive me, Urania; a cloistered Nun ought not to describe such emotions, though she cannot help feeling them: doubtless, you understand such things better than we do, who have been confined from our earliest years within the walls of a convent, and shut out from the most precious rights of human nature.

From this moment began the most fortunate part of our friend's life. Adelaide found her husband improved by years and corrected by adversity; absence and misfortune had made him still dearer to her; and she now first felt towards him the whole excess of love, of which her affectionate heart was capable. She now had no other wish, than to enjoy her happiness in quiet and retirement.

ment. The Lords of Eschenbach had new-built the fortress of Ravenstein, and proffered it to her husband (who had long been united with them in amity) as a fit residence, should it be no longer agreeable for him to remain at the Court of the offended Emperor. Gladly would Adelaide have hastened thither; but Rodolpho had contracted obligations, which at that time prevented him from immediately quitting the Court. He was indebted for life, for freedom, for opulence, to the favour of a princely youth, whom it was only necessary to see in order to admire; and whose situation it was only necessary to know, in order to feel interested for him, even had Rodolpho not been so closely bound to him by the ties of gratitude.

gratitude. This man was the cause, why Adelaide's husband found it impossible to comply with her request.

Need I name to you this noble, this dangerous youth? Alas! who has not heard of the unfortunate John of Swabia; who does not pity and detest in him at once the injured Prince, and the lawless avenger of those injuries?—Wretched youth! what have you gained by that rash and detestable action, to which you were guided by evil counsellors? In what climate do you wander accursed like the first murderer, without being able to fly from your own conscience, and what will be at last the goal to which your painful wanderings lead?

The young Duke of Swabia, at the period when Rodolpho attached himself

to

to his fortunes, was not the criminal, which he is now become through passionate rashness, and through impatience under the pressure of adversity: the epithet, which is now affixed to his name, and which probably will be transmitted to the latest posterity, at that time would have made him recoil with horror. Young, amiable, and unfortunate, he created an interest in every bosom. Even Adelaide (whose prudent foresight made her from the very beginning augur some misfortune to arise from this close intimacy between the Prince and her husband) could not prevent herself from feeling well-disposed towards him: she was compelled to own, that in his complaints against his unjust guardian the Emperor, who withheld from

him

him his paternal inheritance, he had justice on his side; and she earnestly wished, that he might soon obtain the redress of his crying injuries.

I told you, that Adelaide had from the first observed with uneasiness her husband's intimacy with the Duke of Swabia; in truth, when the situation and characters of both were considered, it was impossible for her to feel otherwise on the subject. Prince John was fiery and impatient, an avowed lover of pleasure, and provided by his crafty uncle with ample means for indulging in every excess. The Emperor Albert saw his own advantage in leading the youth (whose happiness he sought to undermine) into labyrinths, whence he would find it an hard task to extricate himself.

He

He thought, that the errors, which he furnished Prince John with opportunities of committing, would excuse his own unjust proceedings towards his nephew; and unfortunately to lead the youth into the snare was a task but too easily effected.

With grief of heart must I confess it, in the principal features of his character Rodolpho resembled his friend very closely. Adelaide's influence, it's true, had for a time represt those inclinations to libertinism, which he so early contracted in Count Donat's school: still had she not succeeded in extirpating them so completely, as to prevent their obtaining their former mastery over his better judgment occasionally, now that opportunities for their indulgence were

continually in his way. Rodolpho had a sufficient advantage over the young Prince in point of years, to have entitled him to be his guide in the paths of virtue; but instead of leading his friend to good, he too often suffered himself to be seduced by him into actions, which were very far from being the most respectable. You may conceive, how much anxiety her husband's want of steadiness must have excited in the mind of our friend; and that anxiety was increased by the dark clouds, which she could perceive rising in another quarter.

That the Lord of the Beacon-Tower was no partial admirer of the Emperor, was a fact well known to every one. In unguarded moments his own tongue had often avowed his real sentiments respecting

ing the regicide Albert, and the deceased Adolphus; the readiness with which he embraced the quarrel of the young Margraves had proved, that he was not unwilling to shew his resentment by actions as well as words; and it was not necessary for him to connect himself so intimately with the young Duke of Swabia, in order to make himself an object of hatred and suspicion at the imperial court. Albert was silent, but his silence was menacing and terrible; and Adelaide had already acquired sufficient knowledge of the manners of the great to guess, that the anger (which regard for his own safety restrained him from venting on the prince) would one day burst on the heads of his unprotected friends; among whom the Lord

of the Beacon-Tower being the most distinguished, would not fail to receive the largest share of vengeance.

—" Oh! let us fly, my beloved!" often exclaimed Adelaide in her moments of apprehension; " let us away to the tranquil vale of Frutiger. Here we breathe no air but such sultry parching blasts, as seem to warn us of an approaching tempest. With every moment the gloom increases; the clouds collect together; the lightning will soon break loose and destroy us!"——

Rodolpho's answers to these remonstrances were seldom such as to give her cause for satisfaction. He talked much of the future greatness of his friend, never spoke of Albert without attaching the word " Regicide" to his name,

name, and frequently recalled to mind his father's dying command to revenge the murder of Adolphus. Adelaide's anxiety grew daily more acute: she redoubled her importunity, that her husband should quit the court; and as she was now in such a situation as gave Rodolpho hopes of an event, which he had long desired in vain, he trembled, lest the too violent agitation of her mind should injure her health materially. He therefore determined for the first time to conceal his sentiments from the woman whom he adored, and to lead her into an error respecting the real state of affairs, which became with every day more critical and serious.

Among his dependents was a young man of noble birth but fallen fortunes,

by name Russeling; he had formerly been in the service of the Duke of Swabia, and had been employed by him to effect Rodolpho's deliverance from the emperor's chains. This circumstance had greatly endeared him to his present patron, who did not perceive that he harboured in Russeling a seducer, whose object was to guide him to the commission of a crime the most atrocious. This man was one of those concealed enemies, who are frequently more dangerous to princes, than those whose armies ravage their dominions, and who openly threaten the subversion of their thrones. Ancient animosity, which had descended from father to son through a long line of ancestors undiminished, lived in his rancorous heart against the emperor:

emperor: he secretly fanned every spark of hatred, which existed in other bosoms; his every word infused additional bitterness towards his uncle into the heart of the Duke of Swabia, to whose person he had still free access; and he kindled again in the heart of my unfortunate brother that flame, which Adelaide with her soothing had so anxiously laboured to extinguish.

The betrayer perceived, that no one crossed him in his evil designs more than the wife of his patron; he therefore exerted his utmost skill to effect her removal from the scene of action.

Rodolpho had frequently advised her to quit the turbulent court, and pass the time of her approaching confinement in the retired Castle near the Lake

of Thun, which she had herself marked out as the future scene of her domestic happiness. Hitherto his entreaties had been in vain: she could not resolve to abandon her husband while exposed to all the dangers, in which the Duke of Swabia's intimacy had involved him. But now that Rodolpho had prevailed on himself to use dissimulation with her, who had never deceived him in the slightest trifle; and now that Russeling with his serpent's tongue had thrown out hints respecting the views of the Duke of Swabia, which led her to suspect (perhaps unjustly) that his marked attention to her proceeded from a passion disgraceful both to her and to the prince; Adelaide however reluctantly was compelled to give up her opinion.

Flight,

Flight, she now thought, would be the only remaining means of destroying the duke's presumptuous hopes, without drawing down his resentment upon her husband. Besides, she greatly needed some respite from the tumultuous and turbulent residence of the court; and every anxiety respecting Rodolpho was removed by his solemn assurance, that it should not be long, ere he rejoined her, never again to quit the repose and security of rural life.

Yet bitter was the parting between these married lovers. Both were tormented by forebodings of misfortune; both felt the pangs of an affection, which made them wish never to be separated; and yet each was still compelled to acknowledge, that to separate was necessary!

With difficulty did they tear themselves from each other's arms. By his patron's desire, Russeling conducted the Lady of the Beacon-Tower to the place appointed for her abode: but as soon as he had seen her established there, he hastened back to the imperial residence, anxious to lose no opportunity of advancing his projects. As unfortunately every circumstance combined to favour them, his detestable schemes were but too soon carried into execution.

In the mean while, Adelaide in the solitude of Ravenstein led the kind of life best adapted to her melancholy situation. The present posture of affairs rendered her heart doubly accessible to every sort of inquietude: she had

had left her dear but unsteady husband entangled in a chain of circumstances, which authorized her to see the future in the most gloomy light; nor was it long before she discovered, that in fixing her abode at the fortress of Ravenstein, she had by no means selected a residence the best fitted for dissipating the melancholy ideas, which perpetually obtruded themselves upon her imagination.

In the spring of her life this Castle had been long her prison; there had she narrowly escaped perishing by famine and by the flames; there too was the grave of her unfortunate mother. It was impossible, that these sad recollections should not have considerable effect upon a mind, which already was

tortured by a thousand causes for anxiety. It is true, the lords of Eschenbach had almost entirely rebuilt the ruined fortress at considerable expence, and had made it so different from its former self, that it was scarcely to be recognized; but Adelaide's enthusiastic imagination saw less what was before her eyes, than what sorrow had engraved on her remembrance indelibly.

The time of her delivery was at hand; and the presence of some sympathising friends enabled Adelaide to look forward to the moment of danger with less fear. Indeed, the laws of our order did not permit either you or myself to leave our convents, and hasten to the assistance of our beloved Adelaide. The Countess Mellusina was no more;

and even had she been still in existence, her presence would have been but little wished or expected by her sister-in-law. I doubt much too, whether (even had we been able to come to her aid) with all our good intentions we should have been able to afford so much real help and comfort, as she received from the female inhabitants of the vale of Frutiger: during the time which she past with Count Donat at Ravenstein, Adelaide by her exertions to moderate the fury of her incensed brother had won their hearts completely; and no sooner did the grateful women hear, that their benevolent protectress stood in need of it, than they hastened to afford her their friendly assistance. Walter Forest's mother, and the wife of Henric

Melthal, (for Donat's increasing tyranny had compelled the family of Melthal to withdraw from his dominions) were among the first to proffer their services; nor did Gertrude Bernsdorf neglect the daughter of her former lord. It was from these good matrons, that I received the account of the following transactions; alas! I was not permitted to hear them from the lips of the dear Adelaide herself!

The Lady of the Beacon-Tower was safely delivered of a son; and the sight of this little smiling innocent was sufficient to relieve his anxious mother from more than half the weight of her melancholy.

—"Now then," she exclaimed frequently, while she kissed her baby with rapture, "now then I only need to see

Rodolpho

Rodolpho partaking my delight, and every fear which now distracts my bosom will at once be destroyed for ever."——

Her wish was granted, sooner than she could have expected Alas! it brought not with it the joy, which (she fondly hoped) would accompany her husband's arrival.

Reports which agitate the great world, are slow in reaching the dwellings of retirement; yet there are *some* transactions, which fame spreads about with the rapidity of lightning, because they are strange and terrible enough to attract the attention of the universal globe.

Who trembles not at hearing the dreadful word, *Regicide?* the emperor Albert was dead; he had fallen by the

hands of the unfortunate John of Swabia and his friends! this dreadful report had been long circulated in whispers among the mountains, where Adelaide had fixed her residence; it at first obtained little credit, but with every succeeding day it seemed to assume more consistency. It had not yet reached the ears of Adelaide; but her attendants saw, that it would be impossible to keep it from her knowledge much longer; the prudent Gertrude therefore, as the person among them to whom the others looked up with the greatest deference, undertook to give the invalid some insight into these melancholy events; observing every possible precaution, that might weaken their effect, and carefully concealing the share, which the Lord of the Beacon-

Tower

Tower was reported to have taken in the business. Chance unfortunately prevented her from executing her kind intentions.

One evening, Adelaide was sitting with her child at her bosom near a window, which commanded the spacious court-yard. On a sudden a single warrior rushed into the court on horseback. Adelaide sprang from her seat with a cry of joy, and flew towards the portal.

—" Whither would you go, lady ?" exclaimed Gertrude, and hastened to follow her.

But Adelaide was already in the court, and before he had time to enter, had placed her child on the bosom of his father.

Rodolpho kissed his baby and its mother,

mother, and then amidst the joyful shouts of the domestics who crouded round their master, he followed Adelaide into the great castle-hall: there was he received with renewed embraces, with questions, blessings, wonderings, and all the delightful confusion of unexpected and overflowing joy.

Rapture at clasping in her arms the man, whom she had so long sighed to see, and at a moment so unlooked-for, prevented Adelaide from observing, that the rapture was not mutual. The eager prattling of affection concealed from her, that she was the only speaker; and many hours had elapsed, before she was sufficiently recovered from the delirium of her joy to ask the question—"Oh! Rodolpho, why thus silent? why thus pale?"—

It

It was not so long, before his attendants had remarked this alteration in their Lord's appearance; and the alarming consternation displayed in his countenance seemed to confirm the reports to his disadvantage, which for some time had been so prevalent. The pleasure, with which his arrival had inspired them at first, soon vanished; and all drew back with shuddering from the man, on whose hands they fancied that they could discover the stains of royal blood.

—" What troubles you, my beloved?" Adelaide at length demanded of her husband, who sat with his eyes fixed stedfastly on the earth, and seemed not to hear her question; " answer me for pity's sake! what troubles you?"—

—" Oh! nothing, nothing!" he exclaimed

exclaimed, then sprang up suddenly, and advanced towards the window— "all is as it should be; nothing has happened but what *ought* to have happened. It is only my foolish heart, that cannot be pursuaded to let me be at rest."—

—"All has happened, that ought to have happened?" repeated Adelaide, whose anxiety became more painful with every moment; "and what then *has* happened?"—

Rodolpho without answering her question, remarked that night was coming on; he then desired a domestic to take good care, that all the gates were well locked and barred, and ordered that the portcullis should be let down to guard the narrow path, whose steps were hewn in the rock, and which was the only avenue to the Castle.

—" Dearest Rodolpho," said Adelaide, while she took his hand with mingled tenderness and apprehension " what need of these precautions? are you not safe in the arms of love? surely, we now have no enemies to dread."—

—" Adelaide, while Albert lived, we had but *one* enemy: now that he is no more, his death has created a thousand avengers, who wait with impatience for an opportunity to destroy us!"—

—" His death?" exclaimed Adelaide in a tone expressing the utmost horror, and betraying that she already guest the misfortune, which she was soon to hear confirmed; " is then the emperor dead? alas! and by whom?"—

Her husband gazed upon her with

a gloomy frowning air, and without replying prepared to quit the apartment.

Adelaide followed him, detained him, and in a voice scarcely audible repeated her question.

Rodolpho bent himself towards her, and whispered somewhat in her ear; yet not so gently, but that Gertrude (who was the only person then present) could distinguish the emperor's name, the Duke of Swabia's, and Rodolpho's own.

—"Now then" said he, with a loud voice and terrible look; "Now then is Adelaide aware, by what name she must henceforth greet her husband?"—

It is easy to guess, how violent an effect

effect this dreadful explanation must have made upon the criminal's unfortunate wife! life is subject to moments, in which a single word is sufficient to bring at once before the mind the whole wide extent of our future fate; in which with a single look and in a single feeling we embrace the whole; and (be they of sorrow or be they of joy) in which man's feeble nature is compelled to sink beneath the gigantic strength of his sensations.

Adelaide lay at her husband's feet deprived of animation. His caresses and the care of her attendants only awakened her to the sense of suffering. It is true, the total deprivation of her intellects for a time preserved her mind from feeling the wretchedness of her situation;

situation; but her health was cruelly affected by the violent attacks of a malady, which soon brought her to the very brink of the grave.

Many months past before she was pronounced out of danger; it required no less a period to elapse, before she was able to accustom her mind sufficiently to seeing all her gloomy apprehensions justified, without relapsing into that melancholy state from which she had just escaped with so much difficulty.

While Rodolpho through his wife's illness suffered both for himself and for her, his situation had become more critical with every day. The favourable hour for flight had been consumed by the side of Adelaide's sick-bed. With no kind friendly hand to pour balm

into

into the wounds of his conscience, their agony was become most acute; and he was now compelled to see (what is seen by every criminal) the deed that was done with very different eyes from those, with which he saw the deed while it was yet to do. He was without comfort, without hope; and already did the emperor's avengers tread close upon his footsteps.

There was no longer any security for the unfortunate family of Rodolpho at Ravenstein Castle: concealment was the only chance for preserving his life from the many swords, that were in search of him. Adelaide's first care therefore on her recovery was to quit her abode; nor did her still weak state of health deter her from immediately executing

ting her resolution. Rodolpho followed whither she thought proper to conduct him, less from the hope of saving his wretched existence, than from feeling it impossible to part any more from Adelaide. The horror, which had taken possession of all her faculties on first hearing of this dreadful act, had now given place to sorrow and compassion: she tortured herself to find some apology for his crime; and when she felt that the excuses of love avail nothing at any judgment-bar except its own, though she found herself compelled to confess Rodolpho guilty, she still vowed, that all guilty as he was she loved him still, and that all guilty as he was she would perish with him.

Willingly did the grateful inhabitants of

of the Vale of Frutiger afford a shelter to her, from whom they had formerly received such essential services; but it was not without much secret murmuring, that they granted the same favour to her blood-polluted husband. How indeed could that innocent and open-hearted race of people willingly support the presence of a murderer?

In the shelter of their huts Rodolpho ran no risque of being betrayed; but it was clear to every one, and most so to himself, that the sacrifice made by them in this instance to humanity, was a sacrifice which cost them very dearly. His own afflicted conscience too prevented him from long remaining quiet in the same place; and he at length suddenly told his wife, that he was de-

termined on hastening to Rome, and on soliciting absolution for his crime at the feet of the holy father. This, he believed, was the only balsam capable of calming the inexpressible anguish, which preyed upon his heart.

Unwillingly did Adelaide suffer him to tear himself from her arms. She would fain have accompanied him in his pilgrimage; but her weakness which still continued, and the caution which it was necessary for a proscribed man to observe upon his journey, compelled her to give up her generous design. Rodolpho set forward in disguise for Rome; Adelaide remained in the Vale of Frutiger with her little son, mingling the milk, which she gave him, with many a tear of bitterness.

A con-

A considerable space of time elapsed, and yet no news arrived from the unfortunate pilgrim: her friends the worthy matrons of Helvetia endeavoured to give this delay, which so justly was the cause of much anxiety to Adelaide, a favourable interpretation; and their husbands solemnly promised, should Rodolpho return with the Holy Father's pardon, they would refuse him no service, which an honest man could require at their hands.

Adelaide's tranquillity began to return: absolution even from crimes, whose mention makes humanity shudder, is no uncommon thing in our days; this is a circumstance, which gives the laity opportunities of throwing much reproach upon the church; but on which,

as belonging to a religious society, it becomes *me* to remain silent—the hopes of our friend were also greatly strengthened by an event, which (when Adelaide communicated it in one of her letters) appeared even to myself as meriting no slight attention; it was, that persons of inferior consequence having all desisted from the pursuit, the only person, who still demanded Rodolpho's punishment, was Johanna, the reigning queen of Hungary, and daughter of the murdered emperor. We trusted, that the gentle soul of a woman would be easily awakened to compassion; and this flattering persuasion received additional force, when Adelaide received an assurance, that it was unnecessary for her to continue in concealment, and that she

might return to her abode at Ravenstein, in perfect security from meeting with injury or insult.

Adelaide and her friends naturally considered, this permission as a forerunner of still greater favours—"It is clear then," said she, "that the place of my concealment was well known to my husband's enemies. It was in their power, had they thought fit to take the most severe vengeance, to have punished Rodolpho's crime on me and on his son; but they molested us not, and I am now permitted to return to my former residence. Besides, Rodolpho is in truth not so *very* culpable; he was seduced into guilt by the artifice of others. He drew not his sword to revenge his own injuries, but to protect

his friend against injustice and oppression. Perhaps he was selected as an instrument of the Divine Vengeance, and commissioned by Heaven to punish Albert's crime, who was himself his sovereign's murderer."—

Oh! Adelaide, how could your pure and generous heart persuade itself even in a single thought or by a single word to palliate an offence, too atrocious to admit of pardon? vainly did you strive to deceive yourself; one serious glance falling on the veil, which affection would fain have thrown over the crime of your beloved, was frequently enough to make you tremble and blush at being employed in such an office.

For some time the Lady of the Beacon-Tower resided at Ravenstein in a situation,

ation, whose apparent tranquillity was more artificial than real, but which still was rendered supportable by the hope of better days. A thunder-clap suddenly rouzed her from her pleasing dreams, and a tempest hurried her towards the termination of her sorrows.

Every attempt to obtain intelligence of the guilty wanderer had hitherto been unsuccessful. Adelaide's messengers returned not; Rodolpho was unable to dispatch messengers in return, for he had no sooner set his foot within the precincts of the Vatican, than he was delivered into the hands of avenging justice. What was his present fate, and what would be that which was still reserved for him, was already well-known to every one in the neighbourhood of Ravenstein. Concealed from

her by the cruel tenderness of her attendants, her husband's situation was a secret to Adelaide alone. Surely it was cruel to hide from her an event, which she could not escape knowing in the end, till the whole conciousness of her misfortunes burst upon her at once, and with the violence of the shock crushed her.

The Lady of the Beacon-Tower entertained no apprehensions for herself; happen what would, she believed her own person to be safe. The inhabitants of the Helvetian mountains, in which she resided, had been long dissatisfied with the government of princes, who only employed their power to rob them of their liberty; and they had secretly resolved to seize the first opportunity of breaking their chains. They were prepared to run

every

every hazard in defence of their adored Adelaide; and they counted it unnecessary to warn her of the approach of dangers, which they were firmly determined to prevent from ever reaching her. But where are the mountains so inaccessible, the protection so powerful, and the valour so impossible to be subdued, that calamity cannot overcome all obstacles in pursuit of her destined victim!

Johanna, the Queen of Hungary, who with the fury of a tigress burned to revenge her father's death, demanded admission into these tranquil vallies, whose inhabitants, from their having granted Rodolpho a temporary asylum, she considered as adherents to the guilty Duke of Swabia. One fortress after

another fell into her power: she became mistress by degrees of the whole country; and at length Adelaide heard the sound of hostile trumpets, ere she had yet been made aware, that the most revengeful of all women had penetrated into Helvetia.

Johanna's mildness towards the murderer's family had been only assumed, in hopes of discovering where Rodolpho himself was concealed. His seizure had rendered further artifice unnecessary, and she was now permitted to show the violence of her resentment without disguise. She led her troops in person against Ravenstein. Though lately repaired and internally fitted up with elegance and splendour, the fortress no longer possest those strong means of defence,

which in its antient state had enabled it to set the attacks of foes so often at defiance. Walter Forest, however, had engaged to undertake the command of it; but at the time when Johanna unexpectedly appeared before the Castle, this brave man was detained by patriotic duties in a distant part of the country. The garrison were capable of making but a sorry resistance; the gates were thrown open; and Johanna made her triumphal entrance into Ravenstein over the bleeding corses of those, who had fallen the innocent victims of her thirst for vengeance.

Oh! Urania, I know well, that justice required the punishment of Albert's murderers; I know well, that it was the remembrance of her father's death,

which transformed his daughter into a Feind; but still . . . . . still I feel it impossible for me without horror and disgust to unite a thirst for blood with the name of woman. Johanna, that Saint-like princess, that builder of cloisters, that worker of miracles; that young and beautiful Johanna who, as 'tis whispered, is secretly by no means averse to the tender passions; even that very Johanna pursued her way over heaps of mutilated corses, and said with a triumphant smile to those who followed her,—" that it seemed, as if her path had been strown with roses."—

The doors of the Great Hall were thrown open; Adelaide lay senseless in the

the arms of her attendants. She was half stretched across the cradle of her sleeping child, as if even in the moment of swooning she had still been aware, that enemies were approaching too pityless to spare even slumbering innocence.

The pale countenance of the Lady of the Beacon-Tower, the beauty of whose features even sorrow had not been able to destroy, and the helplessness of whose present situation served only to render her more interesting, would have touched even the hearts of dæmons with compassion; but on the incensed Johanna this very beauty produced quite a contrary effect. In the eyes of her who gladly would have seen all other charms eclipsed by her own, to be as

lovely

lovely as Adelaide in itself was a crime of no inconsiderable magnitude: nor could the queen observe without extreme displeasure, that among the warriors in her train, many an eye (whose approbation she would gladly have engrossed entirely) dwelt with looks of tenderness and admiration on the fair lifeless statue, which lay extended in the dust, overthrown by fear and sorrow.

—" Who is this woman?" demanded the queen.

—" Adelaide, Lady of the Beacon-Tower."—

—" Ha! say'st thou? the Regicide's wife then?—and yonder brat in the cradle?"—

—" It is Adelaide's only son," exclaimed

claimed Gertrude, at the same time throwing herself at the feet of the Fury, whose arm was already extended towards the slumbering infant, as it lay half-concealed by its mother's robe.— " Mercy, mercy for the poor babe; he has been guilty of no crime; be satisfied with revenging yourself on his unfortunate father!"—

A scream uttered by the little Rodolpho rouzed his mother from her insensibility; she looked up; she saw her baby in the arms of the furious queen, who childless herself and unworthy to have children, knew not and cared not, how such tender creatures should be handled.

Gertrude had quitted her kneeling attitude, to hasten to the assistance of her

her awakening friend, who now took the place which she had left unoccupied, and embraced in Gertrude's stead the knees of the queen.

—" My child !" she exclaimed ; " give me my child ! what would you do with it ? why do you grasp it so rudely ? oh ! it is tender, and you will kill it ! you will kill it !"—

—" What would I do with it ?" repeated the implacable Johanna ; " I would dash the little serpent against the ground, that it may not grow up to be a regicide like its father !"—

—"Oh ! mercy ! mercy ! what crime can the innocent babe have committed ?"—

—" None, lady, none," replied Johanna, while she cast upon the suppliant a look of mingled anger and disdain ;

" 'Tis

" 'Tis out of mere compassion, that I use your infant thus. Had your husband the regicide been treated in his cradle as I will soon treat this screaming worm, he had not been at this moment on his road to the place of execution, where he must soon end his guilty life upon the rack."—

—" Say you?—my husband . . . . . the place of execution . . . . the rack too . . . . my child! oh! God, my poor child!" —thus shrieked Adelaide, who had now sprang from the earth, and was endeavouring to force her infant from the grasp of this female Dæmon; but her exertions were too feeble, and she again sank insensible upon the pavement.

—" Lady," exclaimed one of the warriors, who seemed to be of most distinction

distinction among her attendants, "you forget your sex!"—at the same time he forcibly rescued the crying baby from her hands, and placed it on the bosom of Gertrude.

This bold protector of innocence must have possest no trifling influence with Johanna, since she dared only punish his action by an angry frown, and immediately commanded (probably through fear of his making still further use of his power over her) that the still fainting Adelaide should be removed from her presence.

The poor sufferer was conveyed to one of those dungeons, with which you, unfortunate Urania, are but too well acquainted; Dungeons, whose massy walls had rendered them impenetrable

to

to the flames, which had laid all above them in ruins. But what fortress is so strong, what abyss of the earth is so deep, that its approach is inaccessible to the generous activity of friendship? Gertrude had no sooner clasped in her arms the poor ill-treated babe, than she lost not a moment before she quitted the Castle, and fled with him to implore the honest inhabitants of the vale to afford their assistance to his unfortunate mother.

As more than half the attendants of the barbarous Queen of Hungary disapproved of her late treatment of the wretched and the helpless, and were favourable to the cause of opprest innocence, Gertrude met with but little difficulty (when she secretly returned to

to Ravenstein) in gaining admission to the dungeon of her friend: but she found the unfortunate in a situation, which made her escape almost impracticable—the Queen had that morning condescended to enter her cell, possibly thinking that it was right to fulfill one of the most sacred duties of her faith, the visiting the prisoner: but what she brought with her was not, according to the divine precept, hope and consolation. No; much rather was it her business to heap on the head of her heart-broken captive an additional weight of motives for affliction. An animated picture of the enormity of Rodolpho's crimes, and an horrible enumeration of the tortures to which his sentence condemned him, nearly robbed

robbed the wretched Adelaide of her senses; and she only retained recollection sufficient to feel the last stab inflicted by her tormentor, when the unfeeling woman named the day, on which Rodólpho was to suffer. Well did she hear that cruel word, and that moment of horror inscribed itself on her bewildered brain in characters of fire.

Gertrude, when she hastened to her friend's bedside, could not help fancying that she already embraced her corse: her feelings had been strained beyond their utmost boundaries, and were followed by a total cessation of her powers both of body and of mind.

Gertrude had received some plain hints, that the compassionate servants of

an

an inhuman mistress were disposed to shut their eyes to any thing, which she might undertake in favour of the captive. Walter Forest's mother had accompanied her to Ravenstein; these two kind-hearted women raised the unconscious Adelaide in their arms, and not without much difficulty conveyed her from the dungeon. The guards appointed to watch the door appeared to be buried in sleep, while the fugitives past them; and they reached a narrow portal in the back part of the fortress without meeting any impediment. The good porter turned the lock for them in silence, and (conscious that the veil of darkness would conceal his benevolent action from the queen, who would not easily have been persuaded to

pardon

pardon it), he assisted Gertrude to place her rescued friend in the litter, which waited for them at a few paces from the Castle-gate. Swiftly did they now descend the mountain-pass, and it was not long, before the Castle of Ravenstein was left far behind them.

The good peasants, to whom Gertrude applied for shelter and concealment, granted it without hesitation: but many days elapsed, before they succeeded in snatching Adelaide from the shadows of the grave, towards which her unbroken stupor appeared to be conducting her. On the fourth day, she discovered the first symptoms of consciousness; she started up suddenly, and asked several hurried questions, which were faithfully answered.

Adelaide

Adelaide again sank back upon her couch, and remained for some time silent, with her eyes staring wildly, and directed towards Heaven.

—" Then it was not a dream!" she said at length aloud; " it was not in a vision, that I saw those dreadful scenes at Ravenstein! it was but yesterday, that all this happened, and yet it seems to me, as if since then there had past half a century!"—

—" Pardon me, noble Lady. It is now three days, since you have been in safety: to day is the first Monday after the Nativity, and ....."—

—" Monday, say'st thou? the first Monday after ..... Rodolpho! oh! Rodolpho!"—

She

She attempted to quit her bed, but Gertrude prevented her.

—" Dear Lady," said she, " recollect your weak condition: the sudden chill of the morning-air would be enough to kill you."—

—" Right, right! then it is only morning yet? oh! yes; I now see myself that it is no more. Look, where the sun rises from behind yonder mountain! ha! how red and how gloomy he burns, foreboding that it will be a bloody day!"—

Gertrude comprehended not her meaning, and replied not. Adelaide repeated her request that she might be permitted to rise, with such earnestness that her attendants were compelled to obey her. She suddenly drew her arm

from Gertrude's, and walked a few paces without assistance.

—"Yes, it will do well," said she, after a pause with a look of satisfaction. "Now then bring my child; let me once again embrace him.—But alas! it must not be. My boy is very young, and needs much attention; even in your hands, good Gertrude, he will not be taken sufficient care of, and I must remain here. Oh! my poor husband, I am forbid to follow you; but peace, peace to your tortured bones; repose and pardon to your afflicted spirit!"——

Adelaide with folded hands had sunk on her knees before the cottage-window, whose casement was illuminated by the beams of the morning sun. She now

rose up, and again demanded, that her baby should be brought to her.

Her attendants delayed to obey the order. That delay alarmed her; she insisted with increased earnestness on seeing her child, and they were at last compelled to acknowledge, that on the evening before it had expired.

—" Dead!" she exclaimed, and the tone in which she spoke it exprest by that single word at once all the feelings of agony, which a mother's heart can suffer.—" Dead!" she again repeated, after some moments of silence. Then as if she had suddenly discovered a ray of comfort, she added—" that is right! quite right!—but still I must see it!—my child! show me my child!"—

They conducted her to the cradle, in

which the pallid infant lay, and appeared to smile even in death. She kist it without shedding a single tear, and desired to be conducted back to her couch, and to be left alone.

Gertrude was too much on her guard to grant the sufferer more than the first half of her request. She seated herself by her bedside, and for some time watched unremittingly.—But wearied with her long vigils during Adelaide's insensibility, she at length found her powers inadequate to fulfill her good intentions. About midnight sleep completely overcame her; and now was an opportunity afforded to the wife of my unfortunate brother, to execute that wild resolution whose consequences soon

re-united

re-united her to the husband whom she adored.

Adelaide rose silently from her bed, and left the house without being observed. Through the shadows of night she wandered towards the place, where her broken heart panted to arrive. Her weakness made her long in accomplishing this painful journey. On the day before her arrival Rodolpho had already undergone the torture of the rack; yet did Adelaide reach the place of execution time enough to receive his last breath and his last blessing. His breaking eyes recognized her well-known features, before they closed for ever; he murmured her name, and she sank upon his bleeding bosom*.

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* Some historians assert, that the sufferings

They forcibly removed her from the scaffold; whether out of cruelty or compassion I cannot pretend to say. Understanding how closely I was connected with her, the new Emperor Henry of Luxemburg caused her to be removed to my convent, that she might end her days in my arms. God be thanked, they were ended soon! death and eternal rest were all, that it was left us to wish the poor sufferer. Scarcely had she strength to reach the place

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of Rodolpho of the Beacon-Tower lasted for three whole days. During this time his wife could not be persuaded to quit the place of execution, and it was not till he had breathed his last, that she suffered herself to be conveyed to Basle, where she soon after expired.

place of my abode. The lay-sister informed me that a lady ill and weary requested to see me. I hastened to the convent-gate; it was Adelaide. Wearied in truth she was, alas! wearied even unto death! it was on my bosom, that the angel breathed her last.

All-merciful Heaven, was not the burthen then imposed on me too great for the strength of one like me, a poor weak helpless mortal? the bloody death of my beloved though guilty brother was scarcely announced, when I was doomed to weep over the grave of that innocent creature, whom I called my sister not more with my lips than with my whole full heart!

Adelaide was herself unable to explain to me the connection of those

terrible events, which cost her her existence: but it was easy to guess those which had happened lately. Her poor wounded feet convinced me, that she had performed some long and painful journey, and whither could the wife have directed her steps but to the scaffold, on which her husband was condemned to breathe his last? Poor, poor Adelaide! the attempt to throw yourself into my arms was the last exertion of your exhausted powers: words were denied you to explain your excess of suffering to your sister; but your looks so expressive of anguish and pious resignation spoke to my heart in a language most intelligible!

Adelaide's attendants had mist her soon after her escape, and hastened in pursuit

suit of her: but ignorance of the way which she had taken for some time led them astray. At length the report of Rodolpho's death reached them, and gave them a clue to trace the fugitive. From the place of execution it was easy to follow her to my convent; where else could they expect to find the unhappy Adelaide, but in the arms of sisterly affection?

I learned such circumstances which were still unknown to me from these afflicted women, who were almost distracted at hearing the loss of their mistress, whose sudden death they attributed to their own carelessness in suffering her to escape. Not long after these melancholy events, the *gentle* and pious Queen of Hungary sent to re-

quest that the body of the noble sufferer might be delivered up to her messengers; it being (as they informed me) her intention to deposit it in her newly-erected church of Konigfeld, which she had built on the spot where her father Albert had perished, and in which she had already ordered a sumptuous monument to be prepared for the Lady of the Beacon-Tower.

Report was loud in praise of this generous act of the saint-like Johanna, who thus offered an honourable grave to the wife of her father's murderer. As it appeared to me in a light by no means so amiable, I scrupled not to give the Queen's request a positive refusal. My sister's bones repose in the vaults beneath our convent-chapel; the

marble

marble which covers them bears no inscription except the name of her who is buried there, a name which will be sacred to the latest posterity, as an example of undeserved affliction and of love and truth unequalled.

Come to this place of sorrow, dearest Urania; come, and bathe that hallowed stone with your tears, on which my own still fall in my most serious hours. At present suffer me to rest from the painful task of describing scenes, the slightest recollection of which is almost sufficient to break my heart in pieces. God grant that ere long it may break for ever! Adelaide's smiling form seems to beckon me away to the regions of light.—Rodolpho's shade I strive in vain to discern; it appears not!—oh!

thou my brother! my dear seduced unhappy brother! may the Divine Providence grant me not to close my eyes, till my unceasing fervent prayers shall have obtained the absolution of thy sins, and have gained thy admission into the dwellings of the blessed!

PART THE FOURTH.

Count Donat's Daughters.

Emmeline of Sargans to Amabel Melthal.

PERHAPS, dear Amabel, you had good reasons for quitting the Castle of Sargans, though filial respect forbids my examining what those reasons were; but have not I reasons equally good for lamenting your departure? oh! never more term me your mistress; that name is painful to my heart and injurious to our friendship. You know well, that I never treated you as really filling that station,

station, to which you were destined, when in the days of our childhood my father first brought you with him to Sargans. You were not my attendant; you were my companion, were my sister! away with the jargon of illustrious ancestry and of humble birth; such distinctions disgrace the lips of Helvetia's daughters; and in truth, dear Amabel, when all is justly weighed, she who is the daughter of Henric Melthal, or the relation of Walter Forest and the pupil of Gertrude Bernsdorf, has far greater cause to be proud of her origin, than one who is the offspring of Donat and Mellusina, and who must blush to name as her grandfather Ethelbert of Carlsheim, the unfortunate and the guilty.

Yet take comfort, Emmeline of Sargans!

Sargans! you too can number some few among the connections of your family, who would not disgrace the best and proudest. The venerable Urania Venosta deigns to bestow on you the names of daughter and of grand-child; what matters it, that her blood does not actually flow in my veins, since her heart feels towards me the affection of a mother?

Never can I prize too highly my good fortune in having gained an interest in the bosom of this admirable matron, and being occasionally permitted to profit by her intercourse!

For this too am I indebted to *you*, my Amabel! its true, I can still remember well to have seen her in this Castle, while I was yet but a child; I remember well,

well, that she bestowed on me the most affectionate appellations, that she suffered me to repose in her arms, and that when she quitted Sargans, I wept bitterly, and begged, that I might accompany her. But the harshness with which my father repulsed my dear lost sister and myself, whenever we ventured to express a wish that we might see Urania once more, aided by the lapse of years and the volatility of youth, had by degrees nearly effaced all recollection of her; when you, my beloved friend, arrived at the Castle, and recalled to my mind the noble image of Urania. You boasted, that you had resided for some time under her protection, and that she had taken the greatest pains to instill into your young

young mind lessons of the purest virtue, in order that you might impart them to the two poor orphan sisters, when your father should conduct you to Count Donat's fortress; a step, to which nothing less powerful than Urania's influence could have induced Henric Melthal to consent.

That step was the preservation of Amalberga and of myself. Orphans in truth we were! brought up under the tuition of such a father, and associating with his abandoned intimates, what was it probable would become of us? Heaven be thanked, you have saved us, or at least you have saved *me*. But you are torn from me; and now that you are gone, how difficult should I have found it to remain steady in the way that I ought

ought to pursue, had you not shown me the secret path through the wood which terminates at Urania's convent. I have already frequently eluded the vigilance of my attendants; I have visited Urania; have always found the doors of her cell open to me, and methinks have never returned, without feeling myself happier and better than when I came.

And all this do I owe to you, and yet in writing to your friend Emmeline, can you resolve to offend her by calling yourself her servant? Amabel, you are my benefactress; while I exist, never will I cease to thank you.

Emmeline of Sargans to Amabel.

I have just left the venerable Urania, but I have received in her society to-day less satisfaction than usual. I have gone through a strict examination. Though, Heaven be thanked, my heart is unconscious of harbouring any thing which I should blush to own, yet I could not help feeling, that such close enquiries were painful to me, and that it was impossible for me to answer every question with equal readiness. Explain to me, Amabel, what was the cause of these sensations; you are more intelligent than I am, and have frequently set me right, while I have been

been bewildered among the secret avenues of my heart. Who was it but Amabel, who first taught me to look into myself, and to sit in severe and impartial judgment over my own thoughts and feelings?

Urania during my former visits had thought proper to enquire, how far I am acquainted with the annals of my family. I did not conceal from her, that Gertrude Bernsdorf during the short visit which Count Donat suffered me to pay you in the Vale of Frutiger, had made known to us every thing, of which during fifty years she had been an eye-witness. Urania blames highly the good old woman's loquaciousness, and assures me, that above half what I have heard from her was only calculated to do me harm.

harm. I can well believe, that Urania is in the right; it is at least certain, that Gertrude's narrative had almost robbed me of one virtue, respect for the character of my father; how can I love and esteem that cruel Donat, who was the author of all those complicated misfortunes, which afflicted so many of the best of earthly beings, and my admirable friend Urania among the rest? the benevolent saint chides me for encouraging such thoughts, and bids me forget that, which she has herself long since forgotten; but how is it possible for me to obey her? alas! I have already been myself too severely the victim of Count Donat's vices. I cannot forget that he abandoned my youth to the ill impressions of his low-born

and libertine associates; that he degraded me to be the companion of his Parasites and his harlots: I cannot forget, that it is he and his harsh treatment of her, that I must thank for the loss of my beloved Amalberga!

The subject of Urania's next question regarded the fate of my sister: on this point also I answered her with openness. I did not merely relate those melancholy scenes, which never can be effaced from my memory; I painted them with such warmth and in such lively colours, that the emotion with which my story was heard convinced me, that I had made them present to the eyes of my auditor. Still was she not contented with merely hearing me briefly recite those circumstances, which made her mingle her

tears

tears with mine: she has desired me to communicate to her in writing all that has past in the most circumstantial manner; and she flatters me with the hope of her being able to found such conjectures on this narrative, as may be the source to me of much future consolation, and may even be the means of finally re-uniting me to my dear lost sister.

Oh! were I but certain, that this would really be the consequence, with what pleasure should I undertake a task, which I shall now enter upon so unwillingly! Amabel, you saw how many tears I shed, when that unexpected and most inexplicable event took place; and you will not wonder, that sitting where I now do, those tears flow with renewed violence. It was in this very chamber,

that

that I saw Amalberga for the last time! what pain did it cost me to tear myself away from her! in what distraction did I fall at the feet of my cruel father, and entreat him no longer to imprison my beloved sister, or at least to make me her companion in captivity! he repulsed me with frowns; and the innocent girl heard Count Donat's own hand turn the lock of this chamber, in which the next morning she was no longer to be found. My father and myself mutually accused each other of her flight; *his* accusations were curses, mine were confined to tears: whether both were equally innocent of Amalberga's disappearing is at least to me still a mystery.

And these events, which when even slightly hinted at gave my heart a severe

severe pang, must I compel myself to commit to paper calmly and circumstantially!—yet be it so! the painful task will cost me many tears, but they will not be the first tears, which have streamed within these walls. Urania informs me, that this very chamber was long her own; how severe were her afflictions is already known to you.

I now come to the third subject of enquiry, with which (I might almost say) my adopted mother *tortured* me this morning; and I am scarcely less unwilling to mention it even to *you*, than I was unable to reply to *her* with firmness and sincerity.

You cannot have forgotten what past at the tournament, at which I saw the Bishop of Coira's nephew for the

first time. Urania seems to be almost as well acquainted as you and myself with all that past on that occasion; and were I not thoroughly convinced of the discretion of my faithful Amabel, I might be tempted to suspect her of having incautiously suffered herself to be seduced into revealing the secrets of her friend.

I was not so frank, as you might possibly have been in a similar situation; and my want of confidence in her drew down upon me in some degree the matron's displeasure. I will endeavour on a future occasion to repair my fault, but I doubt being able to prevail on myself to do so. It seems to me very difficult, I might almost say quite impossible, to lay before the eyes of a Nun considerably

considerably advanced in years those weaknesses, which she must have long since forgotten and have learned to despise and ridicule; even supposing, that she should ever have been subject to them in the same degree with myself.

I flatter myself, that I deserve to be forgiven, and that I should run no risque in discovering my secret sentiments even before the most severe tribunal. Who could see Herman of Werdenberg without emotion? neither is it an object of slight importance, to obtain by marriage my deliverance from a family so constituted as Count Donat's. I am assured daily, that I might immediately obtain that deliverance, would I but insist upon being permitted to

assume the veil; and heaven only knows, what step I should not be ready to take, rather than remain longer exposed to such dangers as environ me at Sargans, had I not hopes of being released in a more agreeable manner, by the hand of my beloved warrior. Do you think it possible, my friend, that Herman should persist in his obstinacy much longer, when his only motive is grounded on his aversion to my name, the melancholy and hated name of *Count Donat's daughter?*

It would be superfluous to describe to you the mode of life at present followed in the Castle of Sargans; things go on in their old track. The female favourites of the Count my father resemble each other so nearly,

that the change is scarcely perceptible, when one Sultana retires, and a new one commands in her place. Those days, which I might otherwise pass in tranquillity, while Count Donat with his wild companions are ranging among hills and forests in pursuit of game, those days are now made almost insupportable, thanks to the insolence of the reigning mistress of the Castle. Besides this, the boon companion of my father's riotous pleasures Abbot Luprian of Cloister-Curwald, through impatience for the return of the hunters, never fails to make his appearance at the Castle too soon; and then not knowing how to dispose of his time, he thinks proper to bestow it on me, a favour with which I could most readily dis-

pense. This man is odious to me beyond measure: the ostentatious pomp of his appearance continually reminds me of that worthless Guiderius, who made Urania pass so many uneasy hours. Perhaps, my aversion to the Abbot is merely founded on prejudice; God grant, that I may not find cause to be confirmed in my ill opinion.

Amabel Melthal to Emmeline of Sargans.

It is not then necessary for me to apologize, or to justify my secret departure from her father's Castle, before the tribunal of Lady Emmeline: it seems, she is already aware, that it was absolutely necessary for me to tear myself away from one who is most dear to me, whether the name by which I call her is that of mistress or of friend.—Oh! would that my prayers could obtain from Heaven, dear Emmeline, that the many acts of kindness which you have bestowed on me, might soon be rewarded by your deliverance from the

snares, with which your virtue is now surrounded; by your deliverance from them through the affection of Count Herman!

Yet should you reach this utmost aim of your wishes, I doubt much, whether you would even then enjoy such complete happiness, as is mine at this moment. Fortune acts by the great-ones of the earth much like a step-mother. Their highest state of bliss is seldom any thing better than splendid captivity; and the pomp and state in which they exist, the throng of shining courtiers who wait upon their foot-steps, the necessity of sustaining the dignity of their rank (an obligation, which frequently weighs upon them most heavily) all these are in fact ab-

solute

solute fetters. We, more humble children of the land, are acquainted with no pomp except that of nature, which appears to us ever new; no attendants are ours, except such as inclination and a similarity of tastes and feelings induce to be the voluntary companions of our steps; and no duties are imposed on us but those which are most delightful in the performance, domestic virtue and love for the land to which we are indebted for our birth.

Oh! Lady, how earnestly do I wish for your presence in these dwellings of tranquillity! I deny not, that the vallies in which your father's lofty fortress stands, are fair and fruitful; your castle on the Rhine, whose walls are bathed by that proud river flowing past them

in calm majesty, is a noble and stately mansion, and the shades of the Munster-Vale remind me of those of Paradise: but compared with the days which I now pass in these calm and happy habitations, believe me, the pleasures of your more brilliant mode of life appear but as mere shadows.

Yet let us have patience! the spirit of liberty will by degrees pervade every quarter of the land, and then will every quarter of the land be as happy, as that which I inhabit. Even among *us*, there are certain men (you will observe, that I say *men*, for we women are ever more easily satisfied with our condition than that haughty sex) there are among us some men, who in spite of all the freedom which we enjoy still speak fre-

quently of chains and task-masters, and make loud complaints against the prevalence of cruelty and oppression. They call the emperor's representatives (one of whom is established in our neighbourhood) by no gentler name than that of tyrants; and they are by no means pleased, when these powerful lords condescend to honour us with their intercourse, and to take a part in our rural festivities.

You know well, lady, that I am not disposed to like the society of persons of rank much superior to my own: yet in justice to our newly arrived governor, I must beg you not to imagine, that the Lord of Landenberg in the least resembles either a voluptuous Abbot of Cloister-Curwald, or a fierce

and tyrannical Count Donat of Carlsheim. No! he is a man, who unites the agreeable polish of courtly manners to the frank and generous heart of a true Helvetian; he willingly adopts the plain familiar tone, which prevails among our retired mountains, and is right in thinking, that it must be gratifying to every one of us to obtain the notice of a man of such peculiar merit and who fills so distinguished a situation.

In our part of the country a thousand rural feasts are at present celebrating, such as might be worthy of the golden age. The most illustrious of our people are assembled here from all quarters; and the smile of joy and bloom of health, which animate the coun-

countenances of these numerous pilgrims of pleasure, make our society more gay and brilliant, than is ever found to be the case at the costly entertainments of princes. Every thing is pleasing and satisfactory, except that on the countenances of some of the men (as I before informed you) I can sometimes discover the marks of secret discontent. Among them I must reckon my father and brother, Gertrude's husband (Gertrude herself was prevented by indisposition from joining us) and Walter Forest, who is lately arrived from the Vale of Frutiger; of all these, not one seems to receive the attentions and kindness of our worthy governor with as much gratitude, as his condescension deserves. Its true, the numer-

ous

ous society at present collected in our valley, and the festivities which are every day taking place, are profest to be in honour of the arrival of the emperor's new representative; but to me it appears evident, that their intention is less to show respect for him, than to furnish an opportunity of examining his behaviour, and of prying into the secrets of his heart, when thrown off his guard by gaiety and pleasure.

Methinks, lady, what I write is not proper to be seen by every eye: but the bearer of this letter is trusty; and besides the characters of our pens are to most of our cotemporaries inexplicable riddles. The other day, when we carried presents to the Castle, according

cording to custom on the arrival of every new governor, the Lord of Landenberg singled me from the croud of girls of my own age, and enquired, whether I was a native of these vallies. On this my dear partial mother undertook to answer for me; and in the course of her speech she found means to run over the list of my accomplishments (as she fondly called them) among which she enumerated the art of writing. The governor looked astonished, and acknowledged, that in this respect he must give way to *me* though a female; nor did he beleive, (he added) that among all his lay-attendants there was one who knew how to guide the pen, unless it were Wolfenrad, his Seneschal.

—" Here,

—" Here, Wolfenrad!" he continued, motioning to him to advance; " this pretty maid is Amabel Melthal, who I am told is well instructed in the arts of reading and writing. Were you still unmarried, she would make a proper wife for you, and both might be of great use to me in my family affairs."—

I blushed and retired hastily, and concealed myself among my companions; married or unmarried, Wolfenrad should never be my choice—the conversation too seemed to have taken a turn by no means to the taste of our matrons, for they lost no time in leading us back from the Castle; and when Walter Forest returned with my father and brother from an excursion, which they had

had made among the eastern mountains, they blamed the conduct of the matrons in suffering the young Damsels to accompany them on their visit to the governor. My mother was censured more than all the rest for not having at least ordered *me* to remain behind; for they say, that my education in the convent of Zurich under the venerable Urania, and the polish which my manners acquired during my residence at your father's Castle, have given me a kind of foreign air, which distinguishes me from the rest of the girls, and which in spite of my inferiority to most of them in point of beauty, makes it difficult for me to escape without observation.

I must now close this long epistle,

by

by wishing you patience to endure your present difficulties, and recommending you to look forward to better times, which I hope are at no great distance.

Emmeline of Sargans to Urania Venosta.

I ONCE possest a beloved companion, who was dear to me as myself; Amalberga was her name. She was my sister; but the bonds, which nature had formed between us, were slight in comparison, with those of affection; an affection which I should have felt for her, had I been a princess, and Amalberga a peasant's daughter. It seems to me as if whole years had elapsed, since we were separated; and yet all circumstances, and particularly the unremitting activity which is still exercised in pursuit of the fugitive, combine to assure

sure me, that only a few months have crept away since her disappearance.

You desired, dear mother, to see the history of the poor persecuted girls traced by my pen; I now send you the produce of several sleepless nights, for the night is the only time which I am permitted to call my own. I suspect, you foresaw that the harshness of my jailors would ere long interrupt my personal intercourse with you, and that this was the motive, which induced you to advise my having recourse to my pen.

Count Donat suffered his daughters to grow up under his roof in total ignorance of what was owing to themselves and to others. He believed, that he had troubled himself about us quite sufficiently

sufficiently in making us over to the superintendence of a young governess, whose beauty and whose levity were her sole recommendations to favour. It was clearly her interest totally to neglect the heiresses of Carlsheim and Sargans, in order that after our removal from the world she might entirely engross the attentions of our childless father, a considerable portion of whose inheritance she doubted not being able to secure to herself.

In what regarded our persons, this neglect did us no detriment. In spite of want and oppression of every kind, the natural strength of our constitutions carried us through all difficulties, and we daily increased in bloom and stature: but the health of our minds was seriously

ously shaken. No principles of virtue were inculcated; no one explained to us the difference between vice and virtue; and surrounded as we were on all sides by the worst examples, we already began to contract the bad habits of our despicable associates.

Our father's enemies were almost as many, as there were noblemen whose domains bordered upon his own. Not one was there amongst their number, who had not been offended by him either personally or indirectly: but of them all his most dangerous and deadly foe was Count Lodowick of Homburg, the husband of that Minna of Mayenfield, for whom your history has taught me to feel such unbounded love and admiration.

How

How then was it possible, after all the bitter causes of complaint which Minna alledged against Count Donat, both on her own account, and on yours and her mother's; how was it possible, that in spite of Donat's unremitting enmity of which he daily gave fresh proofs, the noble Count of Homburg should have condescended to sue for peace at a time, when he was the strongest; and that he should even have confided so far in the honour of his enemy, as to trust himself and his lovely wife at the Castle of Sargans?

In this transaction is not your hand perceptible, Urania? oh! you had not forgotten, that within those hated walls were immured two forsaken children, the destined victims of vice or of the grave.

grave. Your benevolent proposal of taking us under your care, which you laid before our father in our earliest childhood, was received by him in the same manner, with which he treats every thing tending to promote the interests of virtue; those frequent attempts, which you afterwards made to draw us within the circle of your power, proved without effect; and you now endeavoured through your friend the Countess of Homburg to snatch us from the precipice, on whose brink we stood. I am not unconscious, my kind protectress, how many artifices were tried in vain to entice us out of the precincts of the Castle of Sargans; how often during our childhood, now one emissary and now another strove to rescue us by force

force from the dominion of our worthless governess; how once the Retainers of the Convent of Zurich had actually succeeded in carrying us to some distance from the Castle, before we were overtaken and brought back to our paternal prison; and how when Count Donat complained of this outrage and demanded satisfaction of the Bishop, the good Priest returned him for answer, that he would do better to send his daughters of his own accord to be instructed by the Nuns in piety and virtue, than to retain them in the Castle of Sargans in order that they might be educated by his paramours, and become in time as worthless as their instructors. It is to you, dear mother, that we are indebted for all these endeavours to

rescue us from ruin, and the visit of the Countess of Homburg was equally your work.

This interview between Count Lodowick and my father possest the merit of at least wearing the appearance of friendly inclinations: whether it was the means of inducing them to live on better terms in future, than had hitherto been the case, I cannot pretend to decide: but it is certain, that the Countess did not neglect the object, which had induced her to enter once more the hated Castle of Sargans. Immediately on her arrival she requested, that my sister and myself might form the society of her daughter, whom she had brought with her. Count Donat could not in common decency refuse

her

her this mark of attention. Therefore during the few weeks that Count Lodowick's family resided at Sargans, we were seldom out of the company of the Countess and her daughter, from both of whom we received a thousand undeserved testimonies of interest and attachment.

It was no slight sacrifice, which the Countess made to gratitude and friendship, when she suffered us to associate so intimately with her well-educated daughter: it was much to be feared, that she would contract some of the numerous failings, to which we had been subjected by our neglected education. But Helen of Homburg, though she was younger than ourselves, ever contrived to make us adopt her own

proper mode of conduct, instead of suffering herself to be drawn into errors by our example.

The mother of our young friend was not contented with having planted the seeds of morality and religion in our hearts; she was anxious not to give up her benevolent task, till she had effected our total preservation. She therefore proposed to take us entirely under her superintendance, and made her request in a tone and manner, as if she had not the least doubt of its being granted. But this very request furnished our father with an opportunity of breaking off with Count Lodowick altogether, a step which he had only been prevented from taking sooner by the inconceivable generosity

sity and forbearance of his illustrious guest.

Count Donat's answer to the noble Minna's request was proud and insolent; her rejoinder was conveyed in that tone of delicate but cutting irony, which is peculiar to herself. Her husband commented on Count Donat's uncourteous behaviour with more warmth and bitterness, than he is accustomed to employ; and the consequence of this conversation was a total rupture between the two Counts, and the absolute overthrow of that edifice, which they had past so many days in raising.

Without an hour's delay did the Count of Homburg quit Sargans; nor would his journey home have been unmolested, had he not been provident

enough, when he visited the fortress of his antient foe, to bring with him a retinue well-armed, and in number not to be despised.

I believe, that he would not have found it impossible at that moment to have carried us off with him: but even though affection for the poor children might have induced his lady to propose such a step, undoubtedly the Count of Homburg's high notions of honour and integrity would have made him recoil with aversion from the idea of forcibly taking his daughters from a man, into whose Castle he had been received under the appearance of friendship.

Thus did we lose this invaluable chance of preservation. It is true, we were still too young to understand, that preserva-

tion

tion was necessary; but yet we felt most sensibly the pain of parting from the Ladies of Homburg: nor did we feel a little mortified at being replaced under the care of the unworthy women appointed to superintend us, whom respect for our illustrious protectress had compelled to keep in the back-ground during her residence at Count Donat's Castle.

Yet though the Countess of Homburg's visit had failed in its grand object, it was not without its use. We had past two weeks in the habits of decorum; we had learnt to see our own failings, and to admire the advantages possest by others; and this knowledge served us as a regulator for our future behaviour. The manners of Helen of

Homburg became the model, by which we formed our own: we were no longer in danger of adopting the evil lessons of our superintendents, for in the remembrance of Helen we had constantly before us a lively idea of feminine delicacy and indeed of feminine perfection.

Oh! Urania, unwearied discoverer of new means to effect the happiness of the two poor orphan-girls, I dare flatter myself, that when the Angel arrived at Sargans whom you sent thither (shortly after the Count of Homburg's visit) to guide us to the paths of goodness, she found that we had already advanced some steps: at least it is certain, that she found us willing and resolved to follow, where she, and Urania, and Virtue pointed out to us the way.

Henric

Henric Melthal (one of my father's vassals, who had always shown too little willingness to advance his evil designs to be a favourite with his master) one day brought his daughter to Sargans. He entreated, that she might be received into the service of the Count's daughters; and either his chusing a moment when Donat fortunately happened to be in an unusually good humour, or satisfaction at finding the stubborn Henric at length inclined to perform willingly the duties of a vassal, or perhaps the observing glance by which he convinced himself that Amabel would in time be beautiful, made Henric easily obtain his demand.

Amabel was accepted as our attendant; she became our play-fellow, and

I may say, our best instructress. It was you, who had educated the amiable girl, doubtless with a view to your adopted children; you know well, how much service Amabel was capable of rendering us, and (God be thanked for it!) I trust, that her intercourse has not totally been without effect.

The well-grounded and solid information possest by that dear girl, her firm attachment to virtue, duty, and truth, and the vast extent of her brilliant qualities, all lay concealed beneath the modest veil of rural simplicity, which hid from every eye the treasure we possest in her, and was for many years the means of preserving to us so invaluable a friend.

We grew up with Amabel in the

closest intimacy; we even obtained permission to accompany her in one of her visits to her father, and there became acquainted with an antient friend of our family. It was Gertrude Bernsdorf, who completed that part of our education, which was too difficult for the power of our young companion. Our eyes were opened; we saw all the dangers of our residence under Count Donat's roof in their true light. We meditated an escape, whose object was taking refuge with you in the Convent of Zurich: but we were too well guarded to effect our purpose. Its true, no one suspected the open-hearted Amabel of deceit; but still a variety of attempts to carry us off had put our father on his guard, and we were

seldom suffered to quit the Castle without attendants.

I cannot persuade myself that it was a sentiment of paternal affection, which made the Count of Carlsheim so anxious to preserve us under his roof. His behaviour towards us left us no doubt, that we might have perished without our loss costing him a single tear; he had also frequently given us to understand, that he designed us for the Convent: but still he could not resolve to gratify those, who wished to take us from him, by suffering them to succeed; neither would he hear of our residing in *that* Convent, where we should have been so happily and so honourably situated, under the protecting care of the venerable Urania.

Since

Since you, dear mother, abandoned the world, great alterations have taken place in our neighbourhood, of which you may not be aware: at least Gertrude has assured me, that for ten miles round the Castle of Sargans, every thing since the days of her youth is become so different, that she scarcely knows the place to be the same. Like most people when advanced in life, Gertrude was accustomed to find great faults with these changes: she hated the sight of trees, which thirty years before she had seen no higher than bushes; she sighed to perceive, that the mountain-torrents had washed away *this* hill at one time and *that* at another; and she looked on it as little better than profanation, when she found buildings raised on places, which

which formerly were corn-fields or pasture-land.

But nothing was more offensive in her eyes than a particular Convent for females, which had been lately erected at no great distance from the Abbey of Cloister-Curwald; and which on account of the extraordinary privileges bestowed on it by the Holy Father, of the beauty of its situation, and of the advantageous manner in which its interior constitution was regulated, had grown rapidly into repute.

Our father had pitched upon this Convent for the future abode of Amalberga and myself; perhaps, it was the first time in our lives, that we had found reason to be perfectly satisfied with his decisions respecting us. We

were

were convinced, that our wish to inhabit the same place with our benefactress Urania would never be gratified; with every day we felt more sensibly, that any religious house whatever would be a much more creditable abode for us, than the Castle of Sargans. Besides, the Convent of St. Roswitha (for the Nuns belonged to that order, who had established themselves in the neighbourhood of Cloister-Curwald) possest the charm of novelty, and our friend Amabel had exprest her opinion in favour of its establishment. In defiance therefore of the prejudiced Gertrude's warnings and admonitions, we determined (whenever Count Donat should seriously advise our taking such a step) to declare ourselves ready to assume the

veil

veil in that Convent, which he had himself selected.

There needed nothing more than such implicit obedience to induce our father to alter his intention. His early intercourse with the worthless of both sexes, his misanthropic seclusion from all general society, and a glance thrown by him upon the formation of his own heart, had made him distrustful of every one else. He suspected hidden views in the most indifferent actions; and he always suspected them most, when he found others most disposed to conform themselves to his wishes.

Our departure for the Convent of St. Roswitha, which (had we disapproved of going) would undoubtedly have taken place the next day, was

was now postponed; it was however judged expedient for us to remove for some time from Sargans, an hostile attack being expected from one of his neighbours, whose views (so Count Donat imagined, though on what grounds I know not) were directed towards the persons of Amalberga and myself.

It happened just then, though it happened but very seldom, that our father was on good terms with the Bishop of Coira. Count Herman of Werdenberg, a relation of our family, at that time filled this important office; his court was selected as our place of refuge from a danger, which only existed in Count Donat's imagination, and the nature of which he would in all probability

probability have been himself greatly embarrassed to explain.

We set out, accompanied by Amabel. Our reverend relation received us with that respect, which was due to our station; I believe indeed, he allowed us even a larger share of it, than we could reasonably claim on the sole score of our rank.

His manner gave us confidence and gaiety, and we soon became attached to the kind-hearted Prelate. We were in truth but simple country-girls, quite unacquainted with the manners of the great world, and only wise enough to be sensible of our deficiency. Accustomed to be treated with nothing but severity, Count Herman's gentleness delighted us; and his protection encouraged

couraged us to enter willingly into those societies, where it was his pleasure that we should be introduced.

The Count of Werdenberg is quite a different kind of person from his predecessors, the old Bishops of Coira. When I recollect the portraits of the venerable Adelfried-Herbert, and of the pious Thomas of Planta, such as I saw them in your closet; and when I compare their austere and mortified countenances with that of the penetrating, the polished, the gallant, the martial Herman of Werdenberg; when too I reflect how different their simple Priest's habit appeared from the glittering and costly robes, in which our Cousin appeared when we were unexpectedly presented to him for the first time, though

though the day was not a festival; when I think on all these things, my dear mother, I can scarcely persuade myself, that he and the originals of your pictures ever have belonged to the same profession.

The manners of the Bishop's court were entirely new to us, but were not the less pleasing. Certainly, our father must have been little aware of the nature of the place, whither he had sent us for shelter; or else it must have been the most bitter hatred against his daughters, which induced him to make us first acquainted with the pleasures of the world, in order that the recollection of the enchanting scenes which they were now witnessing, and the hopeless desire of witnessing them again,

again, might make the cloister for which he destined them seem doubly hateful.

Everything here appeared new to us; not merely the amusements which offered themselves every day to our enjoyment, but the discovery which was made to us in a very few hours after our arrival, that we were beautiful.

—"Beautiful?" said I to Amalberga; "How could it possibly happen, that we should not have found this out long ago?—It is true, I always thought, there was something uncommonly pleasing in your countenance, my dear sister; but still your features were too much like my own, for me ever to have suspected them of being beautiful."—

We

We consulted Amabel on this important point. She assured us with that simplicity which was natural to her, that we did not appear beautiful to *her*, for that on the banks of the Lake of Thun (where she was born) the blooming charms of the village damsels were far superior to ours, at least as far as she could give an opinion; a confession, which we heard her make without feeling the slightest displeasure.

Perhaps in time we should have returned to our former opinion of our beauty, if we had heard them praised by no one except the old Bishop, who was the first to make the remark. But among the young knights, whom the love of Tilts and Tournaments had collected at Count Herman's court, there were

were many whose existence seemed to hang upon our smiles, and who loaded us with compliments which we not only heard but too willingly, but even began to consider as a tribute, which ought not to be withheld from us with impunity.

Among the youthful warriors whom a splendid Tournament had attracted to the court of Coira, were two who particularly attracted the attention of my sister and myself; and it happened to be precisely these two, who seemed blind to that beauty, on which we had now learnt to set so high a value. It is true, Count Eginhart of Torrenburg, to whom my sister gave the preference, afforded us strong reasons for suspecting, that he was not insensible of the power

of

of Amalberga's charms; yet his attentions to her were ever cold and constrained, like those of one who had already formed engagements, and had only just discovered, that he had been too hasty in making his choice.

As for me, my situation was still more unpleasant. The youthful Herman of Werdenberg, the Bishop's nephew, had indeed paid me a few unmeaning compliments on my arrival, before he was informed of my name; but after our first interview, he treated me with utter neglect, and seized every excuse for avoiding my society. Nay; he carried his unjustifiable aversion so far, that when on the evening before the Tournament his Uncle gave him a scarf of my colours, with a command to wear

it

it at the next day's solemnity, it was not without difficulty, that he abstained from insulting me (whom this unexpected mark of the Bishop's partiality for me had covered with blushes) by positively refusing to accept his gift.

—" These are the colours of the Lady Emmeline," said the Bishop, " of the future Heiress of Carlsheim and Sargans. The permission to wear them publicly, which I now give you in her name, may authorize you to encourage hopes, whose completion will not be purchased too dearly with the most precious blood that runs in your veins."——

I attempted to express my disapprobation of the Bishop's inconsiderate conduct, and to disclaim the permission

which he asserted me to have given; but vexation choaked my utterance, and I was obliged to quit the chamber, unable longer to restrain my tears from gushing.

—" This is not to be endured!" I said to myself, as I hastened to take refuge in my own apartment. " Good Heavens! then interest is the only motive, which can persuade Herman to connect his fate with that of Emmeline! let her be as fair, as kind, as amiable as she can be, Emmeline will still be nothing in the eyes of Herman, but the Heiress of Carlsheim and Sargans. —Alas! poor slighted girl! hide yourself to-morrow in your thickest veil, nor let the public eye perceive the blush of shame on your cheek, when every one

one who sees Count Herman's mail decorated with the sky-blue scarf, will cast on you a look of congratulation, and believe that your sex, are the most fortunate while you are in fact the most wretched and despised."—

Much as it cost me, I resolved to deny myself the satisfaction of witnessing Count Herman's exploits, and under pretence of indisposition I absented myself from the Tournament. My sister alone distributed the prizes; but Herman had gained the first, and according to the regulations of the lists he was under the necessity of laying it at the feet of the lady, whose colours he had thought proper to wear.

I was compelled to go through this painful scene, and to see him kneeling before me: but it was evident, that

he performed his task with the utmost reluctance; and his manner provoked me to such a degree, that I could not refrain from assuring him—" that I ascribed no part of this compliment to my own merits, but attributed it entirely to my bearing the title of an Heiress of Carlsheim and Sargans."—

—" Oh! lady," exclaimed Herman with all that impetuous warmth which is usual in young warriors, and which frequently borders on imprudence and rudeness; " how much are you mistaken! the title, which you have mentioned, has no charms for me; besides, you cannot be unconscious, that only in consequence of my Uncle's positive command did I tender my services to a daughter of Count Donat."—

Could

Could any human being have spoken with more contempt and insolence? From that moment I really began to abhor the very sight of the youthful Count of Werdenberg, though the Bishop redoubled his exertions to influence me in his favour. At length finding me deaf to all his insinuations, and that I persisted on all occasions in avoiding his nephew, he plainly declared his resolution of making me his niece, whether my father should consent or not; since the gift of my hand would make young Herman lord of all those extensive domains, which are generally known by the name of the Twelve Cantons.

In reply, I declared my father's intention of making me take the veil;

I also mentioned, that my sister being older than myself had much stronger claims than mine to the paternal inheritance; but above all I dwelt upon Herman's behaviour to me, which became more insulting with every succeeding day. The Bishop treated the two first objections very lightly, declaring, that the mild and bashful Amalberga seemed designed by nature for a Nun, and that her embracing a religious life, would leave me sole heiress to my father's possessions: but when I declared my full persuasion, that I was the object of his nephew's aversion, the Bishop gave way to an involuntary fit of laughter.

—" The youth is an ideot!" exclaimed he. " Lady Emmeline, I protest

to

to you, that in the very first moment of beholding you his heart was made your own, and he spoke of your charms with rapture, as long as he was ignorant of your name: in truth, his passion was so evident, that it was this alone, which suggested to me the idea of making him happy by bestowing you upon him. But no sooner was he informed, that his adored Emmeline was the daughter of that Count Donat, whose cruelty and licentiousness have made him an object of abhorrence throughout Helvetia, than he changed his intentions, and swore to extinguish in his breast every spark of affection for one, who from her birth and mode of education could not possibly be worthy of the love of a man of honour. The youth spoke much

about the dissolute manners of Sargans, about libertine associates, and unprincipled courtezans, to whom the care of your youth had been committed: nay, (to conceal nothing from you) he even found fault with your amiable gaiety of character, which he called by the harsh name of levity; and which (according to him) showed him but too plainly what your husband must expect, fascinating as are the outward charms, with which you have been so liberally endowed by nature."—

Such, Urania, were the Bishop's words; but how shall I explain to you the effect, which they produced upon my mind! at the outset of this conversation, the Uncle's unjust and interested views had increased my resentment against

against the nephew; and I was prepared to express my disapprobation of both in the strongest terms, when this last speech gave a sudden turn to my thoughts, and rendered it impossible for me to utter a syllable more respecting the business, which was then in deliberation.

—"Herman's heart once was mine!" —Such was the sentence, which now occupied my whole mind.—"His heart once was mine," I repeated to myself, as soon as I was alone; "was mine, before he knew my name and expectations! and it is on this name and these expectations, that his whole aversion is now grounded!"—"the licentious manners of Sargans."—"My education committed to unprincipled courtezans."

—Oh! that is true, too true; but yet Herman, does the mariner, who gains the land amidst the fury of winds and waves, deserve less praise, than he whom favouring gales have wafted into the haven? and is it just, that Amalberga and Emmeline should be objects of contempt and abhorrence, because even in the very bosom of vice, surrounded by a thousand snares, a thousand dangers, they never yet wandered for a moment from the paths of virtue?—but it seems, my levity shows but too plainly, what my husband may expect from me! oh! Herman, that was cruel, was unjust! it's true, nature gave me a light heart and a fondness for amusement, which (having but just escaped from my paternal prison) perhaps I may have sometimes

suffered to carry me too far; but was this a reason sufficient for condemning me? alas! perhaps these very spirits, with which you now reproach me as a crime, are but a precious gift of Providence to enable me to bear with fortitude the weight of future woes!"—

These reflections cost me many tears, and I hastened to communicate their cause to Amabel and my sister. With their assistance, I soon discovered that it was absolutely necessary to quit the Bishop's court without loss of time. Amalberga was not less anxious to avoid the Count of Torrenburg, than I was to quit the unjust Herman for ever. Its true, her gentle manners, her quiet and retired turn of mind had saved her from that prejudice against a child of

Count Donat's, which my gaiety had excited against me in the bosom of the Bishop's nephew; but still her union with the man of her choice was equally impracticable, though on a different account.

The Count of Torrenburg was already betrothed to the youthful Helen of Homburg, whom I formerly mentioned in such advantageous terms. He had never seen her; of course she was totally indifferent to him, while what he felt for Amalberga. . . . . Yet how was it possible for the noble Eginhart to break his knightly word? and even had he been resolved to break it, how was it possible for Amalberga to rob the friend of her youth of an husband so truly deserving, that scarcely could Helvetia produce his equal?

Amalberga and Eginhart had never exprest their mutual sentiments in words: but it appeared to me, that they had long understood each other sufficiently to render any verbal explanation needless.

Our departure was determined. Our next letters hinted to our father, that he had but little reason to expect, that the Bishop of Coira would assist his views respecting us; and we soon received an order to return to Sargans. Amalberga and Eginhart made their adieus rather by looks than words: as for myself, I thought it unnecessary to take any formal leave of Count Herman. I felt sentiments in my heart towards him, which I insisted upon terming aversion, and grief that I had ever thought

thought favourably of him; but Amabel assured me, that I felt nothing of the kind—she said, the whole was nothing more than a misunderstanding, which was greatly to be lamented; and she vowed never to rest, till she had justified me in the opinion of a man, who by his endeavours to detach himself from the woman whom he adored, because he believed her unworthy of his love, had proved sufficiently, how totally his soul was devoted to the cause of virtue.

We had managed ill respecting our hints to Count Donat. They excited his suspicions against the Bishop of Coira, and he insisted upon a full explanation. This it was impossible to give, without betraying all our own secrets; and

and the embarrassment, with which we answered our father's questions, drew down a considerable share of his suspicions upon ourselves.

We had soon the grief to witness the renewal of hostilities between Count Donat and the Bishop, and to accuse ourselves of having furnished the occasion. At the same time we were watched with the utmost strictness, and on the pretence of suspecting us of carrying on together some secret intercourse, (though with whom was not mentioned) we were separated. I had always been in a slight degree a greater favourite with Count Donat than my unfortunate sister, and my beloved Amabel was suffered to remain with me. Amalberga was confined alone in this

this chamber, which I at present inhabit, and ordered to resolve upon taking that step, which she had formerly been forbidden to think of; and which now was only insisted upon, because it was fancied, that she discovered some symptoms of unwillingness.

A day was already fixed, when Amalberga was to take the veil in the Convent of St. Roswitha. She discovered more repugnance to this measure with every succeeding day, though for what reason I know not. Her love for the Count of Torrenburg was hopeless; what then remained for her, except a cloister? the Abbot of Curwald past several hours daily in endeavouring to persuade her to obey her father's commands; and the dislike, which I feel myself towards this man, makes me think

think it probable, that his interesting himself in the business made her still more unwilling to comply. Besides this, she received a letter from Gertrude Bernsdorf, which Amabel found means of delivering secretly, and which probably was not favourable to the Convent of St. Roswitha. However, I am still ignorant of its contents; since though whenever I was permitted to pass a few moments with my sister, she endeavoured to find means of communicating something to me which lay upon her heart, so many spies surrounded us, that the attempt was always made in vain.

I have already informed you, my kind protectress, on the last time that I saw my sister, how I threw myself at my

my father's feet, and implored for gentler treatment both for her and for myself; how I entreated in vain to be at least permitted to pass that one night with her; and how I had the agony of being informed the next morning that she was torn from me, without the least information being given as to whither she had been conveyed, or the least hope held out of our ever being re-united.

Since that time my situation has become more painful in many respects. My friend, my Amabel was compelled to abandon me, because it became evident that Count Donat thought her handsome enough to be raised, or rather to be degraded, to the rank of one of his favourites. You know well, that

Amabel's

Amabel's open nature never suspects villainy or danger, except where their existence is not to be mistaken; and therefore you cannot doubt, that she had good cause for her flight from Sargans; her departure and my sister's disappearance, following each other so closely, robbed me of even that little share, which I possest in my father's confidence. It was evident, that I had assisted Amabel's escape, and from this he argued, that I was equally culpable respecting Amalberga's. Would to Heaven, that this charge were just! willingly would I pay for the certainty that my sister is safe, by suffering twice as much as I do on Amabel's account, and which I carefully conceal from my friend,

friend, that the knowledge may not pain her gentle heart.

Oh! Urania, you may chide as you will, but can I *love* such a father? think, that to him alone I owe the loss of my sister and my friend; think too, that his misdeeds were the sole cause, which robbed me of the heart of the man, on whom my whole earthly happiness depended! Herman hated and despised me only for being the Count of Carlsheim's daughter; now (as I hear) he is the suitor of another maiden; and all those hopes, with which Amabel so fondly used to flatter me, of one day regaining his good opinion, are lost, and lost for ever.

I am at length determined to take the veil; fool that I was, for having delayed

delayed to take it long ago! how easily might I have remained in your convent at any one of those times, when I privately contrived to visit you! who would have thought of looking for me there? or if found, who would have been able to force me from the protection of the powerful Domina of Zurich?

Alas! these reflections come too late! I dare not quit my chamber, unless accompanied by watchful guards; and no one is suffered to visit me, except my attendants and the odious Abbot of Cloister-Curwald. He is the only person, who combats my resolution of obeying my father, and shutting myself up for ever in the Convent of St. Roswitha. I could almost fancy, that he acts thus, because he knows me disposed

to

to do exactly the contrary of every thing, that he advises. In general these dignified ecclesiastics are much more inclined to speak in favour of religious seclusion than against it.

Yet whatever may be his design, it is certain that I *shall* take the veil, or rather that I *must* take it. My father's unaccountable determination of burying his acknowledged heiresses in a cloister, is decided and immoveable. I understand, that weary of his riotous mode of life and of the dominion of unprincipled wantons, he meditates a second marriage, and that he has selected one of the fairest and most virtuous among the Helvetian ladies to enjoy the happiness and honour of enlivening days, embittered by age, infirmities, and remorse.

Oh!

Oh! pardon me, dear Urania, for expressing myself with such bitterness when writing of one, who with all his faults is still my *father!* my unfortunate situation, and the weakness of human nature must plead my excuse for what I have said above: neither did I mention Count Donat's future intentions for the purpose of exasperating you against him, but of interesting you in the cause of the innocent girl, on whom my father has fixed his choice. In truth, I need but mention the name of her, whom every engine of force and cunning will be employed to bring into his power, to induce you to exert yourself in defeating his schemes: she is no other than .... Helen of Homburg! she is the daughter of your friend and pupil, Minna; she is the grand-child of the

companion

companion of your sorrows, Edith of Mayenfield! she is the betrothed bride of the noble Torrenburg! oh! hasten, if it be possible, to prevent the misery of her, who in the days of my childhood through her instructions and example purchased for herself the strongest claims on my gratitude! for myself, I ask nothing but your blessing to assist me in that profession, which I shall shortly embrace irrevocably, without bestowing one other lingering thought on all the pleasures, which I leave behind me in the world, and of which I have now taken my farewell for ever!

Amabel to Emmeline.

Oh! lady, that you were but with us! your sufferings in your father's Castle, and your melancholy resolution of taking the veil would soon be effaced from your thoughts completely! Great-ones of the earth, do ye possess even one of those many unconstrained and innocent pleasures, which daily fall to the lot of us, your inferiors? then only do you enjoy the rights of Nature, (to which we, the favourites of that kind mother, have no better claim than yourselves) when you throw aside your fetters, and dare to act like the noble-minded Peregrine of Landenberg. He, though the repre-

sentative of our feudal lord the powerful Emperor, esteems us as not beneath himself, and lives with us, as were he one of the same humble station.

Last Sunday..... never shall I forget that glorious day! when the first beams of the sun were discovered rising from behind the hills of snow, and began to tinge the lake with crimson, all the young maidens of our quarter were already assembled on the green meadow before my father's house—(you know, that Henric Melthal is universally respected, on account both of his age and his wisdom.)—We were to proceed to the neighbouring church in solemn procession, and as Henric's daughter the right of heading the company was mine: but I resigned my place

in

favour of a stranger damsel, who has lately arrived at our village, and who (however exalted may be her proper rank) has become so well acquainted with its disadvantages, that she has been induced to resign it, and seek comfort and oblivion for past sorrows in the bosom of rural tranquillity. Dear lady, could you but see this unknown maiden.... . She has adopted our simple dress, and her peasant's habit makes it as difficult to with-hold admiration from her, as to discover her: I mean to say, that it alters her appearance so much, that whoever had known her in more costly apparel, would scarcely recognize her in her present garb. I saw her for the first time so drest on this occasion; she has of late been

resident in the Convent of Engelberg, and . . . . . But I am running on, forgetful that I meant to describe to you the festivities of last Sunday.

As we moved on under the guidance of our elected queen, our white robes and unbound ringlets fluttered loose in the morning-air, whose freshness stained our cheeks with a deeper red, and even spread a slight tinge over the lovely pale face of our Conductress. It was Easter-day; with songs, pious and joyful such as suited the occasion, we reached the Lake, where a croud of painted boats waited to waft us to the opposite shore, on which the grey spires of the Convent-church were discernable; and thither was our pilgrimage directed.

Long ago, a Convent was established here respecting which there are still many traditions current; but now nothing of it remains but a heap of ruins. The church however is still in perfect preservation. It is never opened, except on Easter-day: and as the Friars hold this place in abhorrence as having been the scene of many monastic crimes and of Heavenly vengeance, it has ever been found difficult to persuade any of them to officiate within these deserted walls. On these occasions, therefore, the short service is frequently performed merely under the superintendance of the two elders of our village. The service consists of nothing more than the expansion and humiliation of the heart before the Almighty for a few

minutes in adoring silence, and a solemn hymn chaunted by the whole united congregation, the words and melody of which are equally simple to the ear and affecting to the heart.

Walter Forest and Werner Bernsdorf, as the two eldest, opened the holy doors for us, and we descended a few steps into the chilling aisle of the church: they commended us girls, for having shown our impatience to pay our service to Heaven by arriving the first. Soon after the matrons made their appearance, conducted by Gertrude Bernsdorf; oh! with what joy did this venerable woman, the counterpart of her former mistress and friend Urania, receive our conductress, the lovely stranger! I mean, how pleased she was

to

to see, that we girls were sensible of our duties, and were arranged in the church before her arrival.

While we sank on our knees, and silently offered up our gratitude to Heaven, the men arrived.—I was still kneeling by the side of our conductress (our hearts were full; much had we to return thanks for on that day) when the solemn hymn began around us, and compelled us to change our attitude. The chorus of a thousand voices, whose united melody made the vaulted pavement tremble beneath our feet, informed us, that the assembly had increased greatly during our prayers. We hastily drew back, for all eyes were fixed upon us; but alas! I found it impossible to withdraw my attention from the objects

which surrounded us, and restore my heart entirely to that devotion, from which the commencement of the hymn had rouzed me.

Alas! dear lady, your poor Amabel, who past so grave a censure on the sudden inclination conceived by yourself and your sister for two knights, with whose merits you were well acquainted; that very Amabel has been still more weak and hasty in her choice! it was a man who stole my thoughts from Heaven, and who made it difficult for me to withdraw my eyes from his countenance. In truth, it was scarcely possible not to look at him now and then; for he was placed exactly opposite, and forgetting the motive which had brought us together, he seemed to make me the only object of his contemplation.

It

It was now, Emmeline, that I envied you one of the privileges of your rank; I mean, your veil which we simple country-girls, who love to look unimpeded at the Almighty's lovely world, and who have no reason to conceal our countenances, consider in general as an unnecessary piece of dress. For the first time I wished for a veil at once to conceal my confusion, and to restore the man (who continued to gaze on me with fixt glances), to that devotion, which he seemed to have lost.—However, he soon recovered himself; but as for me, I still felt during the remainder of the service that kind of uneasiness, of which I have so often heard others speak, and which I have so often treated with derison.

Well! say, that it be love, which has

excited such emotions in my bosom, why should I grieve? the path of the humble children of the soil is not so rough and uneven, as that of the mighty-ones; the inclinations of the one are not so subject to difficulties, as those of the other; our inclinations and acknowledgements are embarrassed by no superfluous considerations of decorum and etiquette; and unless the eyes of my unknown friend have deceived me, I am far from indifferent to him, and we may hope for mutual happiness.

Yet you will smile, when I describe to you the person, of whom I speak. The youthful Amabel has given her heart to no stripling: the noble-looking exalted man, with his heroic mien and with that look of true Helvetian frank-

ness which attracts the observer's confidence so irresistibly, is already in the Autumn of life; and yet.....

But what am I doing? you cannot suppose, that this transient feeling can affect my heart seriously?—Oh! no, no! everything is forgotten, or *must* be forgotten, and it shall be done without a single tear. The object of my attention disappeared immediately after the service, nor have I seen him since. Perhaps, the whole business was a fabrication of my fancy, for the fair stranger, who stood next to me, cannot recollect to have observed such a person. —But then she was so entirely absorbed in her devotions, that she did not even remark, that Peregrine of Landenberg never removed his eyes from her during

the whole ceremony; and when the procession set forward on our return, he followed her with looks that were by no means equivocal: at least this is asserted by several of my village-companions.

Emmeline, how happy would it make me, should such a heart as Landenberg's be bestowed on your.... I would say, on my fair and unhappy friend. She loves without hope; and Peregrine of Landenberg, very handsome, very good, and very powerful, is in every respect calculated to make her happy. The persons, whom the good emperor sends among us as his deputies, are not inferior in power to princes, and in birth are as illustrious as Count Donat; and Peregrine is so mild, so pious, so noble!

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in truth, the condescending manner in which he treats all who are subject to his authority, and the little distinction which he makes between his station and ours, have won me to his interests completely.

You will chide me for writing on no other subject than love; but liberty, health, and the contemplation of the beauties of nature are the best nourishers of that sweetest of all feelings! and be comforted, dear lady; for you too shall one day bless the hour, when your heart first learnt to love. Let but this fair stranger be once the bride of Peregrine of Landenberg, and we shall soon find means of rescuing you from your captivity: then shall Herman of Werdenberg (in whose union with the Damsel

of

of Eschenbach there is not one syllable of truth, and to whom I am certain you are still as dear, as before he knew your name) be compelled to do justice to your excellence, and every trace of misunderstanding shall for ever be cleared away.

The word " misunderstanding" reminds me, that the day whose beginning I have described to you, did not conclude quite so well as was expected. While the youths and maidens under the care of some of our matrons past the evening with songs and dances, there arose some little discord among the men. I mentioned to you in a former letter the prejudices of some of them, among whom I am sorry to count my father. The Lord of Landenberg had

prepared

prepared a splendid feast at the Castle; but our elders thought proper to decline partaking of it, and Landenberg was obliged to consent instead to become a guest at their rustic table in the valley. Peregrine showed us this mark of condescension with a good grace. Unluckily during the entertainment there arrived the emperor's lieutenant of the next Province, by name Gessler; and with him came the Abbot of St. Gall, one of the most abandoned characters existing. These began to reproach our worthy governor for his complaisance, and to treat our elders with contempt; till the indignation of the latter was excited, and they gave the scoffers such answers, as they deserved. The worst treated however was the Abbot, who thought proper to

defend

defend Gessler's conduct without having either eloquence, or common sense in his discourse, nor indeed even breath sufficient to utter it. Upon this several of our young men (my brother Arnold was one of the foremost) interrupted him by singing in chorus the ballad called " Bishop Ulric of Constance ;"* and

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* About the middle of the 10th Century, Bishop Ulric of Constance bequeathed "a very large hogshead of good old wine" to the Convent of St. Gall, on condition that the Monks should themselves be at the trouble of bringing it home. Unluckily, the waggon broke not far from the Convent, and the hogshead fell into a deep pit: it was recovered with great difficulty, and conveyed home in triumph; where in remembrance of this event a great feast was held, at which the Monks, wearied with their exertions in its rescue,

and at the end of every stanza they introduced an extempore chorus applying the ballad to the present Abbot. This at length offended him so much, that he left the place almost distracted with passion; but Gessler thought proper to remain behind, and is still

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did not spare the Bishop's bequest. About midnight (when all were buried in sleep, overcome by fatigue and the strength of liquor) a fire broke out in the Convent, and consumed it, the Monks however escaped with their lives; and the Abbot is said to have fallen on his knees and thanked Heaven for its mercies, on hearing that though the Convent was destroyed, he had saved his strong-box, and the remainder of the Bishop's hogshead.—This probably furnished the subject of the satirical ballad, mentioned above.

a guest at the Castle, from which many of our wise-ones augur no good.—Farewell, dear lady, and Heaven's blessing be with you.

Emmeline to Amabel.

Difficult as it was, I have accomplished my painful confession to Urania, and I feel my heart relieved; I also made another important discovery to her, but alas! without effect. It related to Count Donat's views upon the youthful Helen of Homburg. As was expected, her parents rejected his suit, and it was not concealed from him, that she was already betrothed to Eginhart of Torrenburg. My father's spies brought him intelligence, that on Easter-Monday Helen was to be conducted to her bridegroom's Castle; and Count Donat chose his time so well, that it

was

was almost impossible for his unfortunate victim to escape him. He set forward suddenly with the greatest part of his soldiery; and this morning I heard with horror, that Helen has fallen into his hands! she has been carried by him to the Castle of Upper Halbstein, where he is determined to make her his wife either by fair means or violence, before her friends have time to effect her rescue. My heart bleeds for the poor Helen!

I have already received orders to prepare for my departure to the Convent; it is thought desirable, that as soon as the nuptial festivities are over, I should no longer make the Castle of Sargans my residence, Count Donat supposing that my presence would be

disagreeable

disagreeable to his new bride. Alas! dear Helen, my presence *disagreeable* to you? though I could not relieve you from the weight of your cruel destiny, surely the society of the friend of your childhood, of a companion in sorrow, would enable you to bear them with greater fortitude.

Methinks, Amabel, it seems to me now more difficult to resolve on entering a Convent. Heaven knows, I wished not, that Helen should be so unfortunate as to become my father's wife; I spared no pains to rescue her from this impending danger; yet if in spite of my efforts she should be compelled to become the Countess of Carlsheim and Sargans, might not that event produce the most desirable consequences?

sequences? might not her virtue and charms work a blessed change in Donat's nature? might I not in her society and under her protection again look forward with pleasure to living in that world, which had once such charms for me, but which of late I have considered as an object of such disgust? oh! what blessed effects might the presence of such a mistress produce throughout the domains of Sargans!

In Continuation.

Where shall I look for help! how shall I find some means of changing my father's determination respecting me? This Convent.... Oh! Amabel, call me not capricious, for I have now good reasons to dread and shun that Convent.

I have been warned, warned by some supernatural being, not to take the step prescribed to me by my father: and shall I be disobedient to the voice of Heaven?——Hear, what has happened to me! I went this morning to walk with my usual guards for a few minutes on the battlements. I left my chamber-door locked. Yet on my return I found a slip of parchment fastened on my tapestry frame, containing these words:

—"Fly from Sargans! destruction awaits you at the Convent."—

I had scarcely time to conceal this writing, (whose import, while I read it, had made my blood run cold) before the Abbot of Cloister-Curwald entered

the

the room: I have already mentioned, that he pays me a daily visit.

The impression made upon my mind by what I had just read, for some time prevented me from attending to his conversation: I believed, that in this late occurrence I had received a confirmation of that delightful idea, that there exist guardian Angels, who at times condescend to snatch poor mortals from destruction; and my heart, already half estranged from the Convent by the hopes which I grounded on the exertions of my amiable step-mother, began to search for additional reasons, why I should decline taking the veil, once so much the object of my desires. On a sudden something which fell from the

the Abbot in discourse, caught my attention; and I now first discovered, that the conversation which he had been addressing to me, agreed entirely with the warning of my guardian Angel. I drew back in astonishment! its true, he had before frequently exprest his disapprobation of the Convent; but he now spoke with more energy than ever, and advanced such strong arguments, as could only have failed of their effect, because advanced by *him*.

It immediately struck me, that the mysterious warning was an artifice of this man, who by means of that cunning (which is universally ascribed to him) had managed to obtain entrance privately into my chamber; and who now, by his taking this artful method to give

his arguments the greater weight with me, became more than ever an object of suspicion. Under this impression, I threw the writing towards him with contempt; and asked him—" whether he knew, whose hand had written the warning, which agreed so wonderfully with his discourse?"—

I was prepared to hear him deny positively any knowledge of the parchment, and pour out a long declamation to prove, that it must have come straight from Heaven: how was I astonished, when on the contrary I saw the most lively surprize and indignation exprest upon his countenance. With a stammering tongue he asked me, how I came by the writing; and before I could answer, he hastily enquired, whether I

was sure, that my chamber-door had been fastened, and whether I knew anything of a private entrance? to these questions I made no reply; I wished to *obtain* information, not to *impart* it.

With every moment he became more uneasy. He examined the windows, tried all the locks, stamped upon various parts of the flooring, and then resumed his seat opposite to me, and for some time appeared to be lost in thought.

After a long silence—" and so then" I began, " the worthy Abbot Luprian denies, that this writing came from him, and that it was intended to give my mind that impression, which his arguments were unable to produce?"—

—" And even suppose," he resumed after a considerable pause, " suppose

that I should confess your suspicion to be well-founded; would you therefore accuse me either of treachery, or of views inimical to your interests? well then, lady; since the attempt to deceive you would be vain, I own, that these characters were traced by me. Take the advice, which they give you; take mine with it, and fly from Sargans!"—

—"Fly, say you? my Lord Abbot, this is the first time, that I ever heard that word from your lips!"—

—"Yes, lady, I repeat it! fly from the insolence of your young stepmother, from the tyranny of your unfeeling father!"—

—"And whither should I fly?"—

—"To the Convent."—

—"What? of St. Roswitha?"—

—"Oh!

—" Oh! no, no, no! any where, but thither! fly to Zurich, to the protection of your adopted mother, of the venerable Countess of Carlsheim."—

Sweet as his words sounded, I knew too well the impracticability of this advice, to indulge the idea for a moment. It was plain, that he was only trifling with me; I turned from the hypocritical Friar with contempt, and requested his absence.

Amabel, you already know, what disgraceful reports are circulated respecting this man; reports, of whose justice his conduct towards myself has left me no doubt! the modesty of Innocence is always ashamed to own, that she has been made the object of an improper attachment: I have therefore

hitherto avoided the confession, that Luprian (whose religious vows forbid his laying any claims to the indulgence of honourable love) has been daring enough to avow a passion for me! this it is, which makes his advice so hateful to me; and this it is, which makes me so determined to watch every word which falls from his lips, in order that I may act exactly contrary.

The neighbourhood of his monastery would make me averse to entering the Convent of St. Roswitha, did not his endeavours to put me out of conceit with it convince me, that my abode there will lay obstacles in the way of his designs: he naturally foresees, that I shall be better guarded against his importunities when protected by the good

Abbess

Abbess and her pious train, than in this Castle where there is no compassionate being to listen to my entreaties and complaints.

Before he left me, the Miscreant again mentioned the Convent of Zurich; he again advised me to hasten thither, and had the insolence to propose to be the companion of my flight! you will not therefore wonder, that I repeated my commands to be left alone in a tone the most peremptory—I was obeyed.

I past a great part of the night in melancholy reflections. It was late, when I retired to bed; but after the adventure of that evening not thinking myself in safety, I took care to fasten every window most carefully, and trebly turned the key of every lock.

I started from my slumbers in alarm: methought, a cold hand had touched me! I uttered a loud scream on perceiving, that the gloom of my chamber was dissipated by a glimmering light, and that a tall figure was standing at the foot of my bed. My first thought was, "this is a new artifice of the Abbot;" but there was something in the appearance of this figure so singular, that my earthly terrors gave place to others of a much more awful nature.

It was a tall pale man, his countenance bearing the marks of extreme old age, and wrapped in a monk's habit. The blue faint glare of a lamp in his right hand gave so strange and frightful an appearance to the deep cavities of his cheeks and eyes, that I was certain of being

being in the presence of a Denizen of the other world, and in terror I concealed my face beneath the coverlet.

The fearful vision stood long by my bedside. It muttered much in a melancholy and imploring voice; but the bed-cloaths, in which my head was enveloped, prevented my distinguishing what was said, till I caught something which sounded like "Amalberga:" that beloved name brought me in some measure to myself. After a few moments' hesitation I ventured to lower the coverlet, and to look up.

—"What?" cried I; "com'st thou to tell me, that Amalberga's spirit stays for me? speak, awful vision. . . ."—

It heard me not! it had left my bedside; I still saw at the further extremity

of my spacious chamber the glimmering of the lamp; but in a moment afterwards all disappeared.

I consumed the remainder of the night in examining, what could be the meaning of this midnight visit? I put together the few fragments of the Spectre's discourse, which had reached my hearing; and at first I concluded, that the Abbot (from some motive or other, but from what I vainly strove to form a guess) had falsely accused himself of being the author of the mysterious warning; and that the parchment and the spectre, which had both been conveyed into my apartment so unaccountably, must needs have some connection. However, more mature reflection left me no doubt, that both the one and

the other were artifices employed by the detested Monk to betray me into his power; and I resolved never again to sleep in this suspicious room, which so easily afforded entrance either to corporeal villains or to immaterial apparitions.

My resolution was taken, and I executed it. The insolent house-keeper was well pleased to hear, that I meant to quit this handsome apartment with its noble prospect over hill and dale, and which she immediately appropriated to her own use; while I was contented to take hers in exchange. I have accordingly established myself in a small chamber in the Western Tower, where the only attendant who is suffered to approach me is an old house-maid, who

has out lived two generations of the family of Carlsheim. She is a kind-hearted creature, and frequently endeavours to beguile me from weeping over my doubtful and gloomy prospects by many a tale of events long past, and which now only exist in her recollection.

Part of what she has told me, I shall now repeat, since it seems to have some connection with my midnight visitor. The old Bertha listened with great attention, while I recounted what had happened, and paused for some time, before she made any observation.

—" Lady," said she, " it is clear to me, that you are deceived in supposing, that what you saw on that mysterious

terious night was either the delusion of a dream, or the artifice of some villain; no, lady, no! as sure as you sit there, you have been visited by the real spectre of a dead man!

"Long ago.... (Lord forgive me! it is long indeed, since I came to live in this Castle!) long ago was that very apartment the bed-chamber of the good Countess Urania, who (they say) is still living in some Convent or other. Her husband Count Ethelbert was a cruel man, almost such another as my lord your father, whom Heaven mend, I pray it! well! the Monks of Cloister-Curwald expelled their Abbot and the good Prior Matthias, who took refuge with the Countess; and by means of a subterraneous passage she enabled them

them to escape. Unluckily Count Ethelbert was among the number of their enemies; in a passion he sent his wife away from Sargans, and then descended into the subterraneous chambers to seek for the fugitives. An old servant of Count Ethelbert's assured me, that his lord discovered two of them, and brought them back to that very chamber, where they were tortured in hopes of making them confess some secret or other, though what I know not. At length they were put back into one of the subterraneous dungeons, whose entrance the Count caused to be walled up, and there they were left to perish with hunger. Ah! lady, lady! the dead, if they choose it, could reveal many a cruel act, of which we little dream!

dream! many of my fellow-servants, when afterwards Ethelbert lost his senses, could not comprehend much of his ravings; alas! I comprehended them well! I knew much that must have prest heavy on his conscience, and which now is known to few except myself.

"After a time the bodies of the good Monks were removed from the cavern, because it was said, that their spirits appeared in that chamber, and wept, and wailed so piteously, that nobody could sleep for the noise! yet they were not allowed Christian burial, but were cast into that ruined draw-well in the little back-court, in which finally Ethelbert himself lost his life, being thrown into it by the Abbot Guiderius. So you see,

see, lady, crimes ever meet with their just punishment, while innocence often is rewarded, and always is avenged; which I mention for your own consolation. But as I was saying, doubtless it was the blessed spirit of one of these good Friars, which appeared to you the other night; and truly it is a pity, that your fear prevented you from listening to what he said, for I warrant you, he had good cause for coming. However, it is now too late; and methinks as matters stand, you will do well to take the only means of security now left you as soon as possible and enter into the holy sisterhood of St. Roswitha, where you will be well taken care of, both in body and soul."—

Such

Such was the discourse of my old attendant, which in truth was not calculated to abate the woful impression made on me by this mysterious visit! however, whether her explanation was right or false, it is certain, that the advice contained in the conclusion of her speech was the best that could be given. I have just received an order from my father to hasten my departure, since in a few days he means to bring home his young bride, and will be displeased to find me still at Sargans.

In Continuation.

Then my father has renounced me, and for ever! renounced me for Helen's sake, and as they tell me, at Helen's persuasion!

persuasion! oh! how much must she be changed, if she knows and countenances the severity, with which I am treated. Then farewell my paternal mansion, and welcome, ye holy walls! yet why should I grieve to go? what do I lose in the one? what have I to fear in the other?

And yet methinks, I do not feel quite satisfied in seeking the Convent of St. Roswitha. Oh! if it were but possible to escape to Zurich, where Urania..... But alas! this is impracticable. A strong guard is appointed to conduct me, not whither I wish to go, but whither my father chuses me to be carried.

Farewell, ye gloomy walls, which have

have witnessed so many of my tears! farewell too, thou my good kind-hearted Bertha! would I had known sooner, that among the Castle's inhabitants there existed one such honest creature, whose simple counsels would have frequently stood me in much stead, and whose maternal sympathy would have cheered many a heavy, heavy hour!

The moment for my departure is come; every thing is prepared. The insolent domestics of the Count of Carlsheim, and his still more insolent paramours (*they* are not banished for Helen's sake!) laughed even now, when they saw me weep, while I embraced poor Bertha. From my window I see the litter ready, and near it stands Abbot Luprian with that inexplicable

inexplicable look, which he always wears, when there is mischief in the wind. I will not honour him even with a single word! oh! were I but safe within the holy walls of St. Roswitha! were I but sure, that on the road no artifice will be employed to betray me into the power of this Miscreant! Bertha's account both of him and his predecessor Guiderius have taught me thoroughly, how much is to be apprehended from men of his character.

Farewell, farewell, my Amabel! Bertha has undertaken to convey this letter to you: write a few lines to inform my adopted mother, whither I am gone. I have not yet answered your last letter; it was too gay, and too unimportant

important to require an immediate reply. In the Convent I shall have leisure enough to discuss it fully.—Again farewell.

Amabel to Emmeline.

I AM anxious to receive your answer to my last; yet I will not wait for its arrival, before I continue the narrative of rural events: my heart is too full, and I reproach myself much for having wrapt my meaning in such mystery, when I last wrote to you. Shame upon me, for having trifled with your good heart, and made myself a cruel sport of throwing out hints to awaken your curiosity, when I had it in my power to make you happy by communicating the most agreeable intelligence. Yet surely you must have guest my meaning; your heart will long ago have resolved

resolved your every doubt on the subject. No sooner shall you have asked yourself the question.—" Why does Amabel write all these trifling particulars to me? What have *I* to do with the stranger, of whom she talks so much? what concern is it of mine, whether Landenberg loves her, and what influence can her becoming the bride ofthe emperor's lieutenant have upon *my* fortunes?"—no sooner shall you have asked yourself these questions, than a voice within shall whisper the name of Amalberga; and the letter which I now write, will give you the assurance, that the voice spoke true.

Yes, dear lady; your sister is now an inhabitant of this Valley; she has hitherto been sheltered in the neighbouring Convent of Engelberg, which she

she only quitted on hearing, that the festivities, which are at present celebrating in honour of liberty, would give her an opportunity of embracing her friends, the venerable Gertrude and your Amabel. She earnestly desired to discover to them her situation, and more particularly wished to discourse with me, from whom she hoped to obtain the latest intelligence of her beloved sister.

I am quite vain of the friendship, with which I am honoured by the illustrious stranger, who meets here with universal admiration. Yet in spite of the preference, which she shows me above the rest of my companions,(whom she also condescends to call her own,) still I am not her confidante. You know, that she is naturally reserved: what

what was the cause of her sudden repugnance to taking the veil, which had once been the object of her wishes; why she fled from Sargans; what induced her to remain so long concealed at Engelberg; all these points are still unknown to me. Gertrude probably is better informed: probably too the packet, which your sister sends with this, contains an explanation of all these mysteries; I flatter myself you will with your usual goodness impart so much of the packet's contents, as will satisfy your Amabel's curiosity.

In hopes of inducing you to comply with this request, I will not delay to communicate to you all my own little secrets; though I fear your interest

about your beloved Amalberga and your impatience to examine her letter, will leave you but little concern to bestow on the affairs of the humble Amabel.

Know then. . . . that I am a bride; yes, the bride of a man, whom I love with my whole soul—and yet he is not the person, who made such an impression on my silly heart during the Easter-service.

Fool that I was! I cast my eyes on the noblest among all the sons of Helvetia, and thought, that he was just good enough for the simple Amabel Melthal! Has the name of William Tell never struck your hearing? Helvetia boasts no citizen more virtuous, no patriot more zealous, no seaman more expert, no husbandman

husbandman more industrious, no counsellor more prudent, no warrior more brave!

And this very man was it, this identical William Tell (who into the bargain has long been married, and has several children) who because he happened to throw a few accidental glances on the weakest and vainest of our country-damsels, made her conclude forsooth that the man's heart was hers, and that he desired nothing better than to possess her heart in return.

I should be a thousand times more ashamed of my folly, had there been no cause at all for my falling into such a mistake. In truth, William Tell's eyes, which put all my devotion so completely to flight at church, were not fixed on

me without some meaning; nor were they entirely without that expression, which I fancied them to contain. He really was more struck with my appearance, than with that of any of my companions; it *was* affection, which made him consider me with such earnestness; and after making a few enquiries respecting me, he did not disappoint my expectations; he actually came, and demanded me in marriage.—Only, he did not demand me for himself. No; it was for his half-brother Edmund Bloomberg, who in a few days more will become my husband.

Ah! dear lady, I could say much on this subject. Certainly, love and courtship are very different things in *our* station and in *yours*. The important

"yes"

"yes" is drawn from *your* lips by the authority of parents, by convenience, or perhaps by a sort of preference, which you dignify with the name of love; but when *we* acknowledge the noblest and the chastest of all human affections, our feelings are exhilarating and pure as the gales, which blow from our mountains; we look boldly towards the distant futurity, which love paints in colours as much more beautiful than the present, as the views from the summit of yon lofty rocks are superior to any thing to be discovered in the Valley. But *you*. . . !

Its true, my present engagement is the disappointment of my first love; but yet it is really *love*, which I feel for Edmund. He was already no object

of indifference even on Easter evening, when he was my partner in the dance: I discovered in his countenance features, which reminded me of the unknown, and his discourse betrayed a thousand traces of generosity and benevolence. But when he declared himself to be the brother of the brave William Tell; when William came to make proposals for me, and I blushed to recognize in him the object of my admiration; when he told me in words, which never could have sounded so well in any other mouth, that he selected me for his sister with as much care and as much affection, as he had formely selected another maiden for his wife; then did my heart resign itself fully to his directions,

tions, and I withdrew my love from him to bestow it upon the man, who will soon call me by the name of Amabel Bloomberg.

Amalberga to Emmeline.

At length then the time is arrived, when I am permitted to give you some intelligence of your lamented sister, for well I know, that my Emmeline must have lamented for me much: my heart would have assured me of this, even had not Amabel informed me, how many tears the ignorance of my fate had cost you.

Gentle, feeling soul, receive now the narrative of my adventures, of my freedom, of my happiness! at the same time receive the assurance, that it depends on your own pleasure entirely to become as free and as happy as myself. The means

means too are the easiest imaginable, and (though unknown to us) have long offered us the opportunity of escaping from an abode, where we have experienced nothing but sorrow and persecution.

Yet be it remarked, that things had never been carried to so insupportable a pitch, till the period when I was compelled to take that most hazardous measure of flying secretly from my father's house. Observe then well, my sister, what I am going to relate, since I fear, you will ere long be placed in the same dilemma, and find no other means of escape, except that by which I profited. Oh! how earnestly have I wished to communicate that means to you; but I could find no security for a letter's

reaching you, till Amabel informed me, that she had a secret and certain channel of communication with the interior of Sargans.

You cannot have forgotten, how full was my heart of grief and affection, when we quitted the Bishop's court; and that we both had soon ample reason to repent our having laid our hearts open to a man so stern and violent as our father. Fortunately, our most precious secret was still in our possession; our attachments, both so unprosperous, had not escaped our lips, or we should undoubtedly have met with treatment still more severe: yet what could well be *more* severe than to be separated from you, my sister, and confined for ever within the gloomy walls of a convent?

These ideas were not to be endured. You know, how dear you are to me, and how much it would have cost me to tear myself from one, whom I should have missed at every moment of my life. You know too, that it was easier for *you* to reconcile yourself to exchanging the unjust Herman for the veil, than for me, on whose heart impressions naturally engrave themselves more deeply; besides I possest the melancholy but sweet recollection, that Eginhart of Torrenburg parted from me with sentiments like my own, and was only prevented from avowing them by the solemn promise which he had given, and by the chains of knightly honour. Oh! Emmeline, it is much easier to sacrifice a rejected heart to Heaven, than

one whose affection is returned, even though that affection be unfortunate.

The very thought of a convent was hateful to me; even had it been the Convent of Zurich, to have entered it would still have been misery; since my heart yet cherished worldly hopes, which even under the most gloomy circumstances never fail to accompany that love which is mutual. But now came the moment, when the Sanctuary of St. Roswitha (to whose service I was destined) appeared to me of all others the most odious; and I was firmly resolved to endure every possible misery, rather than suffer myself to be immured in the dwelling-house of hypocrisy and corruption.

My acquaintance with Abbot Luprian and

and with others the most distinguished among the Monks of Cloister-Curwald, had long ago eradicated from my mind that respect, which is generally entertained for the members of religious communities. Still, female prejudices made me restrict my censure to the one sex; and I fondly flattered myself, that vice could never have insinuated itself into the habitations of the brides of Heaven. Methought, it was to the chaste and pious daughters of the church, that Virtue had fled for refuge; and I ever united with the name of a Nun, the highest idea of human purity, of intense devotion, and of unsullied truth.

Conceive then my disappointment, when I was convinced beyond the power of doubting, that the Convent of St. Rosa-

witha

witha was the most licentious temple, that ever was yet raised to unhallowed pleasure!

You are well aware, what sort of reputation the Monks, who in latter times have been Abbots of Cloister-Curwald, have left behind them. *They* were the founders of this Convent; knowing this, you may well guess at the nature of the institution. The endowments of this house are immense: the indulgences, with which they have been gratified by the Holy Father of Rome, are as numerous, as its inhabitants could themselves desire. Nothing can be more beautiful and picturesque than the Convent's situation, nothing more convenient than the regulation of its interior. As to the garments of the Nuns. . . . . Yet that is a subject, upon which I will not

not trust myself to dwell. That excellent friend (whose name for fear of consequences I will not confide to paper, but which you will easily guess) whose letter warned me of the abyss into which I was so near falling, inclosed a sketch of the dress usually worn by the sisters of St. Roswitha. To convince you of the impropriety of their customs, I need only mention, that these wretched women refuse to make to Heaven the trifling sacrifice of their ringlets, which hitherto every Nun was expected to cut away on the day of her reception. It is true, when they are in the choir, or engaged in a solemn procession, or, when at any time the publicity of their appearance makes it necessary to play the hypocrites, the holy veil conceals their hair curled

curled with care and decked with wordly ornaments; but the veil is but seldom worn except on such public occasions. Besides, would you believe it, Emmeline? they wear shoes with high heels and long-pointed toes fastened up by silver chains; things which to wear, would be reckoned both a sin and a disgrace even for us worldly damsels! judge from their dress what must be their morals, and spare me the pain of a description more circumstantial.

The uneasiness, which my knowledge of these particulars (contained in that letter which you privately conveyed to my hands) excited in my bosom, was raised to the highest pitch by the discovery, that Abbot Luprian was induced

to

to influence my father to fix his choice on this Convent for my future abode, because he had views respecting me the most improper; views, which he thought could not fail of success, were I once inclosed within the walls of St. Roswitha, where (let him dissemble as he pleases) to my certain knowledge he is omnipotent.

Here was a discovery! oh! my Emmeline, how anxiously did I long to communicate to you this information so important to us both! I wished, that you should be made aware of everything, which could ever be in the least detrimental to you; though from your having always been my father's favourite, I concluded, that he would not insist on your taking the veil so peremptorily,

peremptorily, as was the case with his rejected Amalberga!

You must have remarked, that whenever we were suffered to pass a few moments together, a secret trembled upon my lips, which I was only prevented from revealing by the vigilance of our jailors. I frequently resolved to disclose everything to my father: I thought, that he could not have been so unnatural, so inhuman, as consciously to drive his daughter into the jaws of perdition; the Abbot and his accomplices would have been unmasked, and myself rescued from the dreadful Convent. But alas! whenever I attempted to address him, that dread of him, which we both of us imbibed with our mother's milk, overpowered me, and I sank at his feet unable

unable to pronounce a syllable.—Besides, I had no proof of the guilt of the Nuns of St. Roswitha except the letter of my friend, who had always been the object of his peculiar aversion, and whose interference would have drawn down upon her his anger and revenge.

You know her well, that excellent courageous woman; yet while she ever exprest before us the utmost abhorrence of the Convent of St. Roswitha, never could she prevail on herself to sully her lips and our ears by declaring the true grounds of her aversion. At length my extreme danger made her resolve to sacrifice her delicacy, and she sent me that intelligence in writing, which she had never dared to reveal in speech.

It

It was not the anger of my father, which she had alone to apprehend on this occasion; it was also the Abbot's power, who (if publicly accused) she knew well, would be supported by the Pope and the whole monastic community of Helvetia. You are not now to learn, how closely all Monks unite, when one of their order is attacked by laymen.

I knew not what to do; the day drew near, which was to decide my fate; the most painful distress preyed upon my mind, and slumber seldom visited my pillow. It was in one of these uneasy sleepless nights, that I heard a low murmuring sound at the wainscot of my chamber. I listened; at intervals the sound was repeated; I thought,

thought, that it was but the gnawing of vermin, and I again reposed my head on my pillow, when on a sudden I heard a loud crash. The flames of the night-torches streamed towards me, as if impelled by a strong current of air; I was struck by a piercing chillness, which seemed to breathe from the habitations of the dead, and before I had time to collect my thoughts, I felt myself encircled by two arms.

In this situation, not to be in some degree alarmed was impossible; yet I had of late been so much accustomed to terror, that this fresh trial did not overpower my senses. I was aware, that the arms, which had seized me, were those of a female; and I soon recovered resolution sufficient to examine the person,

person, by whom I was thus unexpectedly visited. I beheld with rapture the dear friend, who had already warned me; and with her was an old Monk in the habit of Cloister-Curwald, whose appearance had something in it so extraordinary, that I doubt much if he had approached me alone, whether I should have received him with as much fortitude, as I now did, when I saw him accompanied by my excellent protectress. It was indeed the consideration, what terror might have been excited by his visiting me by himself, which had induced my friend to become his companion.

Oh! how can I sufficiently express my gratitude to that dear woman for the unwearied care, with which she watched

watched over me. It was not enough to have put me on my guard: she saw, that I needed more to be done, and she hastened to do it.

Deep in the bosom of the hill which rises to the north-west of Sargans, there exists a small society of pious Hermits. Their community is indebted for its origin to a deposed Abbot of Curwald, who, accompanied by five partners in the same calamity, found shelter and tranquillity in this unknown solitude. The excellent Urania was their preserver. Two of their companions who lost their way while following them through the subterraneous caverns, which they traversed in their flight from persecution either fell into the hands of their pursuers, or must have perished accidentally

dentally by some miserable death; since no tidings of them could ever be obtained. The rest reached the place of refuge in safety, and commenced a tranquil and holy life in the wilderness, which their industry soon converted into a terrestrial paradise. Here they long existed unknown to any one. Some travellers, whom chance conducted to their abode, were struck by the air of innocence and happiness which prevailed around them, and consented to fill up the chasms left in their society by the loss of their two unfortunate brethren, and by the death of the eldest of the fugitives named Matthias, which shortly followed. The three, who first offered themselves were accepted; but the founder's rules having

restricted

restricted the number of Hermits to six, the others were compelled to withdraw their request.

Yet ever as death gradually removed those, whom Urania had rescued, the will of Heaven still conducted to them some new associate; so that it almost seemed, as if the society was kept complete by a kind of miracle. Of those who belonged to the original institution, only *one* now remained in existence.

Four years before her paying me this midnight visit, had my protectress accidentally been bewildered among the mountains, and found her way to these holy Hermits, who received her kindly, and made her acquainted with the origin and constitution of their order. These

 circumstances

circumstances were already known in part to my friend, who had shared with Urania in the good deed of saving the persecuted Monks from destruction. She declared her name to them, and promised them eternal secrecy on the one hand, as they did eternal friendship to her on the other. The banished Abbot and two of his companions were at that time still alive; and looking on the power of once more thanking one of their preservers on this side of the grave as a signal and most unexpected blessing of Providence, they earnestly entreated her to make frequent visits to their solitude, and enjoy with them a foretaste of that tranquil happiness, which awaits the blessed in another world.

She

She gladly accepted the invitation, and (except to her husband, on whose discretion she could depend) mentioned to no one the existence of that Hermitage, whither friendship and reverence attracted her steps so willingly and so often. The pious men became the confidents of her most secret designs; and I was too dear to her, for her not to mention my name to them and the difficulties in which I was involved. This proved the means of my preservation. The principal Hermit, the only one of the six fugitives now existing, remembered well the subterraneous passage, by which he had fled from destruction; and it was resolved, that this passage should now furnish me also with the means of escape; that

Count Ethelbert had walled up the entrance to the Castle was no obstacle to this scheme: the three youngest of the Brotherhood provided themselves with proper tools; and their labours were carried on with so much effect, that I now saw myself under the protection of my friend, and the road to escape open before me.

One only reflection embittered my flight: oh! my Emmeline, how gladly would I have made *you* the partner of it! surely, some indistinct suspicion of what was to happen must have floated before your mind, and made you entreat my father with such extreme earnestness to be permitted to pass only that one night in my apartment.

Your prayer was refused, and my wish

wish to rescue you rendered fruitless. The day was breaking; expedition was necessary. My friend too comforted me by the assurance, that your situation was not so immediately dangerous as mine, and that at all events your escape could be effected by the same passage, should such a measure be hereafter found adviseable.

While we within the chamber were busily engaged in arranging my flight, the assisting Monks had been employed on the outside in repairing the broken wall and the wainscot, through which was the passage to my room; and they had performed their task so dexterously, that though to enter it from without was still easy, it was almost impossible for persons unacquainted with the me-

chanism to discover from within any door leading out of the apartment. Nothing however can be more simple than this secret. On the south-west side of our chamber, there runs a sort of frame of carved ornaments round a picture of the "Flight from Egypt."—Count the seventh pomegranate from the bottom, and using some little strength to force it back, you will possess the key of the whole mystery. A slight push will make the pannel recede; a broad staircase of five-and-twenty steps will then present itself, and if you keep always to the right, you cannot possibly miss your way. Yet the passage is long, and fatigue or anxiety, lest you *should* have mistaken the road, may give you much disquietude, should

you

you traverse the caverns without a guide to comfort and sustain you. I advise you therefore only to escape alone, should you be in some most urgent danger. The good Hermit has promised also to watch over your safety; he will keep a spy continually in the Castle, who can inform him of all that happens to you; and (should he find it unavoidable for you to take so desperate a step as the quitting your father's protection) then lest his unexpected appearance should seriously alarm you, he will prepare you for flight by a written warning, and afterwards assist you to carry his warning into effect.

Yet in spite of these assurances, I could not resolve on parting from you, my beloved girl, without many a tear.

I still loitered, wishing that I could at least leave some token behind me to convince you, that I was in safety, and thus spare you the anxiety, which doubtless my disappearance must have cost you. But my deliverers insisted, that any such measure was too pregnant with danger to be adopted, and at length I was compelled to obey and follow them.

I will not describe to you what I suffered during my pilgrimage through the long and gloomy passages, nor my satisfaction at finding myself at length safe in the dwelling of the holy Anchorets. Oh! what can surpass the sentiment of liberty, and the consciousness of being surrounded by none but those, who are virtuous and humane! how different,

my

my Emmeline, from our feelings in the Castle of Sargans! there we met at every turning with nothing but present sorrow and anxiety for the future; with nothing but hypocrisy, perfidy, the cruel necessity of concealing our real sentiments from every eye, and above all the terrific toil of wandering along a slippery path, where we dreaded with every moment to lose our footing, and to be plunged into the same gulph with those abandoned creatures, whom we saw endeavouring to drag us down with them to perdition.

When we quitted the Hermitage, Gertrude conducted me into these vallies. She was well-known to the Nuns of Engelberg, and easily obtained a refuge for me in their Convent; and so happy

did I feel myself among these pious women, that had it not been for *one* consideration, I should have become a member of their sisterhood.

Can you not guess that one?—Alas! that even impossibility should be unable to vanquish the power of love. Could I but once accustom myself to unite inseparably the name of Eginhart of Torrenburg with that of the happy Helen, I should soon succeed in convincing myself, that to take the veil was now the only option left me.

Gertrude wrote me word, that the Abbot of Curwald's suspicions respecting my flight having fallen upon her, his secret persecution had compelled her to repair to Stein; where her husband was occupied in constructing a

house suited to the improved state of his income, and which displayed the good taste imbibed by him in his youthful Italian travels. I was delighted to have my friend so near me; and my joy was increased, when I heard, that the great meeting of the Helvetians on the borders of the Lake of Thun would not only furnish me with an opportunity of seeing Gertrude and her husband, but of embracing our mutually-beloved companion, Amabel Melthal.

Oh! what a blessed day was that of our re-union! as I lay before the altar, the most fervent prayers of gratitude for my own escape, of entreaty for yours, flowed from my heart, and left me no leisure for observing the little incidents which occurred during the

service. The lively Amabel assures me, that the eyes of the most distinguished person present, of no less a man than the Emperor's Vice-gerent, were fixed upon me from beginning to the end. It was her prejudice in my favour, which made her imagine this: there was nothing, which could have led him to distinguish me from the other village-maidens, not even my dress; since not only prudence but my natural taste has induced me to adopt the usual garments of the Helvetian country-lasses. Still Amabel asserts, that there was a look of distinction and nobility about me, which attracted the eyes of the Lord of Landenberg; and it is certain, that during the whole of that evening he seldom suffered himself to be away from me

for

for a single moment. Unluckily, his attentions by no means flattered me; and should I find Amabel's suspicions likely to be verified, I shall lose no time in regaining the Convent of Engelberg.

Any further explanation of what has happened to me I shall reserve for our meeting, which I now look forward to with impatience. The search after me seems to have been given up; and Gertrude has at length permitted me to disclose the secret, by which you may join us at your pleasure. In spite of the good Monk's sermons, and of advice more savouring of prudery than sound sense, I charge you, dear Emmeline, *not* to wait for things being carried to the greatest extremities, before you make use

use of the secret disclosed in this letter—and yet to fly from a father's house without the most absolute necessity. . . . . Alas! I know not what to *advise*; I know only, what I *wish*.

Yes! earnestly, most earnestly do I wish to see you once more my companion, not only for *your* sake, but for my own. I dare not entirely confide myself to our good Amabel: how is it possible with her talents, that she should be so partial to persons so unworthy of her esteem; and how can she be so blind as to repose such imprudent confidence in those, whose intentions are (at the best) extremely to be suspected? yet 'tis her own open guileless nature, which misguides her

her respecting others; and unfortunately, those others know but too well, how to turn her weakness to their own advantage.

Amabel to Emmeline.

How long a period has elapsed, since a letter from your hand reached the inhabitants of these vallies! is it not wrong to mingle so much anxiety with the pleasures of your friend, or is Bloomberg's wife less dear to you, than the playfellow of your childhood, Melthal's daughter?

I really begin to suspect, that there is something in wedlock which frightens all unmarried persons away from us sober matrons. Since my wedding, Amalberga seems less at her ease with me, though I spare no pains to make my house agreeable to her. Peregrine

of

of Landenberg, the good-hearted unassuming Landenberg, frequently honours me with his visits; and it quite vexes me, that he should so seldom find my society made delightful by the presence of the "lovely stranger," for in our valley Amalberga is known by no other name.

I confess the Lord-lieutenant (whose gentleness of manners prevents his rank from being felt as a constraint) would be a more welcome guest to me, did not his seneschal Wolfenrad follow him every where like his shadow. Yet I know not why I should have taken such a dislike to this man; he is sensible, and nothing can be more proper than his behaviour; and yet somehow or other, I cannot endure his countenance. However,

ever, I try to conquer this antipathy, since he is in high favour with my husband, and Peregrine has commissioned him to settle with me the best means of enforcing his suit with Amalberga: for you are to understand, that he has avowed himself her suitor, and that in express terms.

For Heaven's sake, dear Emmeline, persuade your sister not to throw away her happiness. Eginhart of Torrenburg is now quite out of the question: the whole country rings with the report of the splendid balls and tournaments which are shortly to be given, in honour of his union with the youthful Helen of Homburg.

In Continuation.

EMMELINE, what dreadful tidings have reached us! it is said, that Helen has been carried off by your father, and compelled to espouse him; and that you are already ordered to depart for the Convent of St. Roswitha! Heavenly powers, should these tidings be true!—What can be done for you? what can I do? And yet Amalberga assures me, that she informed you of a means of escaping, that could not fail.——Could I but consult with your sister, or with Gertrude Bernsdorf!—but even in these once tranquil vallies there is but too much uproar and disturbance carrying on. Disputes have arisen between the Governor and the elders of our people; in consequence

consequence of which, the most distinguished of the south-western deputies have hastily quitted these parts; Gertrude and her husband have also left us unexpectedly; and neither Landenberg's tears nor my entreaties could prevent your sister from returning to her Convent.

In my anxiety to do something towards your rescue from this impending danger, I have conquered my prejudices against Wolfenrad, and applied to him for advice; for his patron the Lord of Landenberg is too much occupied with public affairs to permit his listening to my difficulties, and my husband declares himself incapable of advising my proceedings in so delicate a business.

Wolfenrad's counsel is, that Edmund should

should arm a body of his young companions, hasten to Sargans, force you from the guards who will be appointed to escort you to that abominable Convent, and then convey you hither or else to Engelberg. I was in terror and anxiety; this must plead for me, when I confess, that my fears got the better of my prudence, and that I have made Landenberg and his Seneschal acquainted with more respecting you and Amalberga, than was by any means necessary. And yet what harm was there in making a confident of the man, who (I sincerely hope) will one day conquer Amalberga's unjustifiable obstinacy, and give my dear Emmeline a brother's protection and a sister's name?—oh! let but this one step be taken, and all your difficul-

ties will speedily be at end; Landenberg is powerful; let but Landenberg once be Amalberga's husband, and she and you will be both as happy, as your Amabel would be now, did not anxiety upon your account embitter her every moment.

In Continuation.

Misfortunes follow each other so close, that grief bewilders me! I know not how to collect my thoughts sufficiently to write down the number of wounds, which have been inflicted on my heart within these few days.—And for whom should I write them down? not for thee, sweet Emmeline, for it is but too probable; that thou art in a better world! not for thee, Amalberga, for thou art gone, gone no one knows whither! yet will I commit to paper what

what has past, and what I feel, in hopes that should the grave hide me without my ever again embracing my friends and sisters, they may see how much I have suffered on their account, and may do justice to the fond heart of their lamenting Amabel. And that the grave *will* hide me, and that soon.... Oh! is it not most probable? all around me is confusion, is uproar! all are furious, though wherefore I know not: yet surely the most pious and peaceable of all people, that the earth holds, can never be so blind to its own interests, to its own happiness, as to rise in rebellion against the Lieutenant of their imperial patron, against the most gentle and benevolent of created beings, against Peregrine of Landenberg!

What

What have we to do with the evil reports, which reach us from that unhappy Province, where Gessler rules and rages? we are secure under Landenberg's protection; we can even expect from his generosity succour and compassion for our less fortunate brethren. To all of them, but above all to my venerable father and to my brother's family, (who consider themselves as no longer safe in the neighbourhood of Gessler's jurisdiction) has Landenberg voluntarily offered an asylum among our mountains, which (I trust) will still long remain the abode of peace! I must lay down my pen! my heart is too full at present to admit of my writing intelligibly; besides, I see Wolfenrad approaching, who (now that my husband

has

has departed to see what can be effected towards your preservation) is my only comforter, and who doubtless comes to tell me, what has been done on your behalf, and whether anything remains for me yet to do.

In Continuation.

I am something more composed: there are hopes, that my Emmeline may have escaped from this dreadful scene! Wolfenrad has promised to hasten a person after my husband, and assist him in the researches, which are making respecting you: he engages also, should you be found, to deliver this and my former letters into your hands. Heavens! how one may be deceived at first sight! there was a time, when I could not

endure this man, and now that all others have forsaken me, he proves the most active of my friends !

There are many parts of my former letters, which will appear to you mysterious; I will now explain them. I received on the same day your written narrative of what had past in your father's Castle, and further tidings respecting you, which overpowered me with horror. Your letter, which you left with Bertha, must have remained in wrong hands for whole months together; and the condition, in which it at length reached me, has left me no doubt, that its seal has been forced, and its contents perused by more persons than myself.

Scarcely had I recovered from my

alarm at finding, that you must have set forward long since for St. Roswitha's Convent; scarcely had I received my good kind husband's promise, that he would immediately set out and make closer enquiries respecting you, when the dreadful report reached me, that flames had consumed that very Convent; flames not kindled by chance or the vengeance of offended Heaven, but by sacrilegious cruel men! nor was the sword less active than the conflagration; it is said, that few have escaped with life from this horrible outrage, whose instigator's name is still unknown to us. Much too is said respecting the secrets of this Convent, by no means to the credit of its inmates; we have even been assured, that the Abbot of Cloister-

Curwald, and the chief part of his brethren were involved in the Convent's destruction, though whether they came there on the news of the danger, or were found with these wretched Nuns at the moment when their habitation was attacked, I will not pretend to judge. Every malicious speech, which relates to the Convent in which (according to all accounts) you must necessarily have past two whole months, seems to plant a fresh thorn in my bosom.

Bewildered by these dreadful tidings, I believe, that I must for a time have lost my senses: for I suddenly found myself at the gate of Amalberga's sanctuary, without being conscious how I came there, or what was my object in coming. Probably I wished to unbur-

then to her my full heart, and indulge myself in bewailing with her our mutual misfortune; but I could not hope to obtain either assistance or advice from her, whom the tidings which I had to communicate must needs make, if possible, still more wretched and more helpless than myself.

I rang the bell, and the Porteress appeared. Conceive what I felt at hearing from her, that that very morning during matins a band of armed men had rushed into the church, had seized Amalberga, and had forcibly borne her away. By whom this atrocious outrage was committed, no one yet knows: the people, on hearing of it broke into universal uproar, and raved against this violation of the Sanctuary!

now, all voices but mine unite in laying the blame upon Landenberg; and to prove the probability of his being the offender in *this* instance, innumerable deeds of infamy, said to have been secretly committed by him, have been alledged against him; some of them of a nature, that makes even Gessler's most infernal actions appear but trifles. Alas! is it possible, that I have been so grossly deceived by the simplicity of my heart? —Even Wolfenrad, the most faithful of his vassals, does not venture to assert positively, that he is innocent: but let who may be guilty, that worthy man has promised to assist us, and I hasten to finish this letter, that I may commit it to his care. Oh! should he be so fortunate as to find you, hesitate not to confide

confide in him, and follow him to these vallies; alas! I can no longer call them these *happy* vallies, for peace is banished, and discord and confusion have usurped her place. Its true, as yet open hostilities have not taken place; but the cry against Landenberg is loud, and the public voice scruples not to compare him to Gessler, the inhuman governor of Uri.—" Freedom! freedom!"—is now the word in every mouth; but it sounds no longer so melodious, as when it formed the burthen of our Sunday-songs! it seems to me, as were it spoken in the dying groans of those, who must purchase with their blood the small portion still left of this treasure!

To complete my misery, my good old father and my brother are arrived

at my cottage in a condition, that makes my heart bleed. My father has been cruelly mis-used by Gessler, and his lands are confiscated; Arnold has been obliged to fly, on account of having committed the mighty crime of striking the officer of justice, who seized our father's oxen, and then contemptuously bade the poor old man yoke *himself* to the plough in future, and do the office of the beasts which he had lost.—Oh! dear Emmeline, I sink beneath the weight of griefs, which my Edmund's absence makes me feel doubly heavy.

Amabel to Emmeline.

I HOPED to derive some comfort from the presence of my relations, but my hope has proved vain. My father lies ill and helpless on his bed from the consequences of Gessler's ill-usage; and Arnold..... You will suppose, that I can receive but little augmentation of my tranquillity from this impetuous young man, when you recollect, with how much violence and passion he used to watch over me in former times. If he surprised a youth gazing on me with rather too much earnestness though but for a moment, that moment was sufficient to make him almost frantic with resentment,

ment, and vow vengeance against the offender; nay, he even dared to extend his vigilance to yourself and Amalberga. Do you recollect a particular evening, when you had both privately stolen with me to my father's cottage in hopes of passing a few gay and pleasant hours, which seldom occurred at the Castle of Sargans? it is as present to my recollection, as had the scene past but yesterday!— it chanced, that some stranger-knights, who were going to a tournament at the court of the Bishop of Coira, had seen us on the road; as we were all three arm in arm, they supposed us to be of the same rank; they delayed their journey, got themselves introduced into our joyous circle, and proposed to us to dance; but Arnold.... Ah! you cannot

cannot have forgotten, how sharply he answered them; how bluntly he gave them to understand, that their departure was desirable; and how (as he conducted us back to the Castle) he made no scruple (without heeding your rank) of reading you both a severe lecture upon the necessity of reserve towards strangers, and the propriety of living retired under your paternal roof.

Well! the part which he then thought proper to play, he has now taken up afresh, but with more warmth than ever. One would think, he might find other things to do now, than to watch his sister's conduct; but not the most trifling of my actions passes unobserved by him, and very few of them pass uncensured.

censured. He forgets, that it is solely on your account, that I have any intercourse with Wolfenrad; and that it is absolutely necessary for an intercourse to be kept up, as long as he journeys backwards and forwards about your affairs, and brings me tidings respecting you, which hitherto (Heaven be thanked!) have been favourable. My brother insists upon it, that I ought never to exchange a syllable with this man; although he is much too old and too ugly to be an object of danger or suspicion, even were I not protected by such good preservatives against the arts of a seducer, as an heart full of love for Edmund, and veins full of that blood, whose every drop is true Helvetian!

What

What Arnold may *think*, I cannot say; but I *know*, that love is never mentioned in my conversations with Wolfenrad. He is married as well as myself, and at all events it would be unwise to offend him just at present, when he has the power of doing us so much harm; for during Landenberg's absence he can act exactly as he pleases.

However, I have given up the point. Arnold has taken a cottage near me, and as my own is solitary and unsafe during Edmund's absence, I have removed to my brother's, where I share with my sister-in-law the office of nurse to my poor sick father. Here there is no chance of seeing Wolfenrad, for there has lately been an open quarrel between

between him and Arnold, whose threshold he has sworn never to cross again. Yet I am impatient to find an opportunity of conversing with him; for I collect from some hints (which he has occasionally thrown out, though there was not time to explain himself) that he has not only proofs of your having escaped from the conflagration, but that he has actually conveyed my letters to your hands. As to Amalberga, he referred me to a Nun at Engelberg, who is better informed than himself; but he said, that in what regarded you, dear Emmeline, the intelligence, which he had to communicate, could be given by no one but himself, and was of a nature too delicate to be conveyed through a third person.

I have

I have told every thing to my sister-in-law, who is my confidante: she disapproves of her husband's strictness, and agrees with me, that I ought to take the earliest opportunity of going to Engelberg, and learning some news of your sister. She cannot approve of my having any intercourse with Wolfenrad in defiance of my brother's positive commands; but she has kindly consented to see him herself, and endeavour to learn from him the good tidings respecting you, which I am too anxious to hear, to permit my waiting for them with patience. Whatever may be the consequence, I *must* be informed, and that speedily, how and where you are at present, and by what blessed means

means you escaped from the hands of your persecutors, and from the fiery death which menaced you in the Convent.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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